Early Coins of North India

An Iconographic Study

SHATRUGHNA SHARAN SINGH

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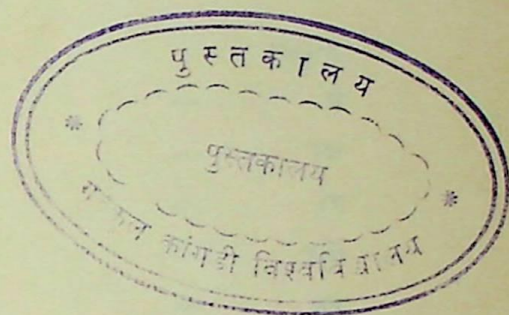
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PREFACE

I take the opportunity to dedicate my maiden book to my dearly beloved friend Sri Rajyabardhan Sharma and his wife Srimati Jayashree Sharma as a token of gratitude and esteem, which I shall always cherish for them. Their unfailing love and deep affection has been the source of strength.

Words are not adequate enough to place on record what I owe to my teacher and supervisor Dr. Bhagwant Sahai, M.A., Ph.D., University Professor and Head, Department of Ancient Indian History & Archaeology, Patna University, Patna. It was under his able supervision and constant guidance that the work could assume its present shape.

I owe a lot to Dr. Dr. B.P. Sinha, M.A. Ph.D. (Lond.), Retd University Professor, Department of Ancient Indian History & Archaeology. Patna University, Patna for having supervised my research work at the initial stage. He also deserves my respectful thanks for offering helpful criticisms from time to time.

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Dr. M.M. Singh, Dr. B.P. Roy and Dr. S.N. Sahay respectively Readers & Lecturer, Department of Ancient Indian History & Archaeology, Patna University, Patna also deserve my thanks for their criticisms.

I owe a lot to my father Sri Pradeep Singh for allowing me outside for the research work. Thanks are due to my friends Sri Sadan Sharma and Sri Kumar Arbind, M.As., who evinced keen interest in the preparation of my thesis.

I must record my indebtedness to the National Library, Calcutta for allowing me to use their reading room and supplying me some valuable photographs.

I would also like to thank my alma-mater, the University of Patna for having awarded me a Junior Research Fellowship (U.G.C.) which helped me a great deal in the completion of this work.

Finally I wish to place on record my sense of gratitude to all those, who may have either directly or indirectly helped me during the period of research.

I must place on record my hearty thanks to all those great savants whose writings I have extensively utilized in the preparation of this work. Inspite of best efforts on the part of author, some omissions may have unintentionally crept in, for which the indulgence of readers is sincerely craved.

I would be failing in my duty if I do not thank Sr. N.K. Singh, Prop. of M/s. Janaki Prakashan, Patna for undertaking the publication of my work.

PATNA, —SHATRUGHNA SHARAN SINGH
Sept., 1983.

TRANSLITERATIONS

a अ	ṛ ऋ	ansuvāra	— m̐ ṃ
ā आ	e ए	visarga	: ḥ
i इ	ai ऐ		
ī ई	o ओ		
u उ	au औ		
ū ऊ			

k क्	c च्	ṭ ट्	t त्
kh ख्	ch छ्	ṭh ठ्	th थ्
g ग्	j ज्	ḍ ड्	d द्
gh घ्	jh झ्	ḍh ढ्	dh ध्
ṅ ङ्	ñ ञ्	ṇ ण्	n न्

p प्	y य्	ś श्	kṣ क्ष
ph फ्	r र्	ṣ ष्	tṛa त्र
b ब्	l ल्	s स्	jñ ज्ञ
bh भ्	v व्	h ह्	
m म्			

Note : The common words and modern names are usually written without any diacritical marks.

ABBREVIATIONS

Abhilāṣit	Abhilāṣitārthacintāmaṇī.
AI	Ancient India-Bulletin of the Archaeological Survey of India.
Aṁśumad	Aṁśumadbhedāgama.
ASI	Archaeological Survey of India.
ASIAR	Archaeological Survey of India, Annual Reports.
ASS	Ānandāśrama Sanskrit Series.
AV	Atharva Veda.
BMCAI	Catalogue of the coins of Ancient India in the British Museum, London.
BMC (The Coins British Museum)	Catalogue of the coins of the Greek and Scythic kings of Bactria and India in the British Museum, London.
BSOAS	Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, London.
CASR	Cunningham's Archaeological Survey of India-Reports.
The Coins, Gupta Dynasty	Catalogue of the coins of the Gupta Dynasties and Śaśāṅka, king of Gauda in the British Museum, London.
Bṛ-Saṁ	Bṛhatsaṁhitā.
Caturvarga	Caturvargacintāmaṇī.
CII	Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum.
CGGC. Bayana Hoard	Catalogue of the Gupta Gold coins in the Bayānā Hoard.
DHI	The Development of Hindu Iconography.
EHI	Elements of Hindu Iconography.
EI	Epigraphica Indica.
GOS	Gaekwad Oriental Series.

HFAIC	History of Fine Arts in India and Ceylon.
HIIA	History of Indian and Indonesian Art.
HOS	Harvard Oriental Series.
IA	Indian Antiquary.
IHQ	Indian Historical Quarterly.
IMC	Catalogue of the Coins in the Indian Museum, Calcutta, Vol. I.
INC	The Indian Numismatic Chronicle, Patna.
JARS	Journal of the Assam Research Society.
JASB	Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta.
JBRS	Journal of the Bihar Research Society, Patna.
JBBRAS	Journal of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society.
JBORS	Journal of the Bihar and Orissa Research Society.
JDL	Journal of the Deptt. of Letters.
JIH	Journal of the Indian History.
JISOA	Journal of the Indian Society of Oriental Art.
JNSI	Journal of the Numismatic Society of India.
JOR	Journal of the Oriental Research.
JPASB	Journal and Proceedings of the Asiatic Society of Bengal.
JRAS	Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland, London.
JUPHS	Journal of the U.P. Historical Society.
L.ll.	line/lines.
MASI	Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India.
Mbh.	Mahābhārata.
M.sm.	Manu Smṛti.
NC	The Numismatic Chronicle (Journal of the Royal Numismatic Society, London).
NS	Numismatic Supplement.
P.	Purāṇa.
p/pp	page/pages.

PIHC	Proceedings of the Indian History Congress.
Pl/Pls.	Plate, Plates.
PMC	Catalogue of the Coins in the Punjab Museum, Lahore Vol. I.
Rām.	Rāmāyaṇa.
RV.	Ṛg-veda.
Samarāṅgana.	Samarāṅgaṇasūtradhāra of king Bhoja.
S B./Śat. Br.	Śatpatha Brāhmaṇa.
SBE	Sacred Books of the East.
Vāj Saṁ	Vājsaneyī Saṁhitā.
Viṣṇudh	Viṣṇudharmottara.
Vol/Vols.	Volume, Volumes.

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INTRODUCTION

Iconography is the scientific study of the image making and the processes involved in it. J.N. Banerjea rightly says that iconography is the interpretative aspect of the religious art of a country which becomes diverse in many ways. In plain words, iconography may be defined as the science of making image of the cult-deities. The sources, upon which the image-makers put reliance are many and the numismatics is one of them. Long ago, the significance of numismatics as a reliable source for the study of the development of iconography was not properly understood and as a result it was relatively a neglected field of study. The main source in that case formed the images of the cult-deities either standing independently or enshrined in the temples. But we know that art is the manifestation of mind in the solid. What man thinks about religion and spiritualism manifests in his works of art which include coins also.

The history of coinage in our country is quite old and its antiquity can be pushed back as early as 700 B.C.[1] It can be asserted that the coinage in India was evolved at about 800 B.C. and if we accept the view of Alexander Cunningham by assigning 1000 B.C. a date for early Indian coins, we are not likely to go wrong, at least the margin of error would be very small.[2] These coins which are so early in date bear on their sides a large number of symbols which have been subjected to close study. It has been found that the symbols appearing on the early Indian coins are not meaningless. Going a step ahead, Coomaraswamy held the view that the symbols on the punch-marked coins amount to explicit iconography.[3] These symbols in most cases have religious significance and they constitute the earliest source in point of time to study the development of religious ideas and conceptions in history. .

In the early part of human history, when we have no record to find out the religious conception and ideas of mankind, these coins fortunately prove to be our only positive source for the study of man's beliefs. It is in this background that the importance of coins as a source of study of the development of religion and religious ideas may be properly understood. Of course, we have literature which reflects the ideas of mankind about religion and philosophy and these literary writings receive incidental corroboration from the study of early Indian coins.

The study of Indian coinage on being thoroughly probed, presents a stagewise development of Indian iconography. The iconographic study of the

coins is sometimes more authentic because they represent the contemporary method of depicting the cult-divinities in localities. Whenever, there are changes in the way of representing any deity iconographically, it can be noticed on the coins of the subsequent period. From the time of the punch-marked and the tribal coins down to the time of the Imperial Gupta coinage we have a gradual history representing the development of the iconography of divinities belonging to numerous cults. They reveal to us the current way of representing the deity in the territory where they were in circulation. The representations of Śiva on the local coins hailing from Ujjayini are the most authentic iconic representations of the deity in that region. The iconic depictions of Kārttikeya on the coins of the Yaudheyas are fortunately most authentic ones when we compare them with the descriptions found in literature. The image proper of a deity may be out of date or it may be that the sculptural representation of the deity is not available in that case coins are the only reliable source for the study of iconography of that particular deity. It is very often the case that we do not light upon comparatively early specimens of images in various localities of northern India, in such cases the coins discovered in those places are sure to help us in a very remarkable manner to determine the early iconographic types of various gods and goddesses worshipped there. It is needless to say that these numismatic depictions of the deities are in many cases really based on the actual sculptural representations of them.[4] The sculptures or images alone are not sufficient for studying the development of iconography, rather the coins are more authentic inasmuch as they represent the current way of portraying the deities as has been asserted earlier. Therefore, when the image making was not in vogue in early Indian society, coins furnish the only positive evidence to study the religious ideas and beliefs of contemporary period and, therefore, the coins are of enormous value for the study of development of iconography. But the importance of the coins as the authentic and contemporary source for the study of the development of iconography has not been emphasized proportionate to their value. Therefore, a comprehensive work on the iconographic study of the Indian coins is a long felt need of the students of iconography. Foucher and Coomaraswamy were the first to recognise the value of the coinage for the students of iconography and it is in this spectrum that Coomaraswamy observed that the symbols appearing on early Indian coins amount to explicit iconography. Foucher tried to interpret the symbols on the early Indian coins as being Buddhist in character in his book *The Beginnings of Buddhist Art in India*. But it was a preliminary attempt and all symbols could not be Buddhist just as all symbols could not be *tāntrik* as sought to be advocated by Durga Prasad. Another work in the field is the one entitled *The History of Indian and Indonesian Art* by A.K. Coomaraswamy, where efforts have been made to explain the symbols as being merely religious in character. It has been said that the symbols amount to explicit iconography. But this voluminous work does not give justice to the topic and it is more like a passing reference. The first pioneer

effort to exploit the coins for iconographic study was made by J.N. Banerjea in his work, *Development of Hindu Iconography*, where he devoted one full chapter. He indicates in detail how the numismatic sources may be utilised for the iconographic study. *The Age of the Kuṣāṇas, A Numismatic Study* by B. Chattopadhyay is another effort, but it is devoted only to the Kuṣāṇa coins. Prior to this Durga Prasad tried to interpret the symbols appearing on the punch-marked coins as being *tāntrik* in character; but it was successfully refuted in subsequent period.

Another work in the field is the one entitled *Religion and Iconography on Early Indian Coins* by Dr. O.P. Singh, which is no better than a rough survey of the icons and devices and religious symbols on the coins with an appendix on the foreign currency. The work is too brief and does not go into details as to how the numerous symbols appearing on the early Indian coins became associated with the cult divinities as their attributes. Much more to say is that the work is a misnomer.

The latest work in the field is the "*Coins and Icons, A Study of Myths and Symbols in Indian Numismatic Art*" by Dr. B. Chattopadhyay. It definitely throws a flood of light on the iconographic study of the coins. The work by Dr. B. Chattopadhyay is the only authentic work which has given due importance to numismatics as well as seals for the study of the history of the development of the iconography of the deities. But since Dr. B. Chattopadhyay has taken the coins and the seals both into account for the iconographic study, he could not be able to do full justice to the numismatic materials they rightly deserved. Therefore, a detailed study of the iconography of the gods and the goddesses represented on the early coins of northern India has been taken up for filling up the gap in our knowledge of the development of religious art in connection with the gods and the goddesses depicted on the coins not treated in detail by previous authors on the subject.

The present work consists of six chapters, dealing with the (i) Religious significance of the Symbols and Devices on the Punch-marked and Cast coins, (ii) Deities and Symbols on the Tribal and Local Coinage; (iii) Deities and Symbols on the Indo-Greek Coinage; (iv) Deities and Symbols on Śaka and Kuṣāṇa coinages, (v) Deities and Symbols on the Gupta Coinage; (vi) Development of cult on the basis of the history of coinage with an introduction in the beginning and a conclusion at the end. In the present work effort has been made to trace stagewise, periodwise and dynastywise development of the iconography of the deities.

Coins published in the various catalogues of north Indian museums have been exploited as the original source for the study of the development of iconography. It will not be out of place to say that the coins are like a running commentary on the religious myths of the people through their aniconic manifestations since very early times. The aniconic tradition of the early

Indian people is manifest through the symbols like wheel, crescent, mountain, river, tree, flower, geometrical figure, Nandipada, Svastika, etc. It is mainly on the basis of coins as well as seals alone that we can divide the development of religion and iconography into three stages namely the aniconic, theriomorphic and the anthropomorphic. The sculptures cannot give such clear cut stagewise development.

But the evidence furnished by the coins is not free from doubt. It is, therefore, all the more necessary that they need be corroborated. The literature and texts on iconography including the Vedas, the Purāṇas, the Upaniṣads, the Brāhmaṇas, the Ārayṇakas, the *Bṛhatsaṁhitā*, the *Mānasāra*, the *Amarakośa* etc. have been subjected to study so that it may be ascertained if the iconic representations of the cult divinities on the coins are in conformity with the literary descriptions. It is found that the numismatic representations of divinities are more authentic than the sculptural representations in some cases. The study of coins from the iconographic point of view is essential because it is hare that the minds of the mintmasters and the issuing authority reflected, which is stirred by the popular belief. It is the people's belief be it religious, totemic or otherwise, that inspired the die-cutter to select the coin-devices. The latest conception of people about the cult and cult divinities manifested through the coins. It is because the issuing authority showed respect to the sentiments of the people by choosing coin-devices of people's choice and thereby popularising it.

The present work is based on the study of the coins of north India only. The study of south Indian coins is outside the scope of this work.

It would, however, not be out of place if some of the salient features of the present work are enumerated here. Firstly, as far as it could be practicable, no pains have been spared to make the study of the divinities represented on the early coins of northern India sufficiently comprehensive by utilising the numismatic materials exhaustively. Secondly, the representations of the various deities on the coins have been discussed in such a manner that they may suggest the development of the iconographic features of the gods and the goddesses taken up for the purpose of study. Thirdly, wherever it could be possible, an attempt has been made to correlate the textual descriptions of the deities with their representations on the coins. Fourthly, an endeavour has also been made to compare the characteristic features of the north Indian representations of the deities with those their representations on the coins. Fifthly, an effort has also been made, wherever possible, to show how far the Indian divinities represented on the coins compared with the Hellenic and the Zoroastrian counterparts. And lastly, it has also been endeavoured to interpret and explain the various symbols, emblems and attributes as well as the figures of the vehicles (*vāhanas*) found in association with the representations of the gods and the goddesses dealt with in the present work.

Photographs of certain important and representative coins, as far as possible, have also been attached here, but due to unavoidable limitations, much against the wishes of the author, it has not been possible to include as many photographs as he intended. However, detailed references, where relevant illustrations could be found, have been given.

REFERENCES

1. Bhandarkar, D.R., *Ancient Indian Numismatics Carnichael Lectures*, 1921, pp. 45-46. The beginning of the art of coin making in this country must be placed earlier than 700 B.C.
2. Chakraborty, S.K., *Ancient Indian Numismatics*, p. 33.
3. Coomaraswamy, A.K., *HIIA*, p. 44.
4. Banerjea, J.N., *DHI*, p. 8.

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1

Religious Significance of the Symbols and Devices on Punch-marked and Cast Coins

The earliest Indian coins are small flat pieces of silver either square or round, adjusted to a certain fixed weight of somewhat more than 56 grains, named Karṣa.[1] The coin itself was known as Kārṣāpaṇa from Karṣa, the weight and *apana*, custom and use. Manu, as suggested by S.K. Chakravarty,[2] takes Kārṣāpaṇa to denote a Pana or coined money, which is Tāmrika i.e., made of copper and is Karṣika, i.e., one Karṣa in weight. Kārṣāpaṇa as the unit of the measurement of copper and not as a coin must be dated back at least to the Brāhmaṇa period and it would not be unreasonable to infer that this was the national weight system of the Āryans like the tabñu of the Egyptians. That copper was the metal that ordinarily served the purpose of exchange admits of no doubt.[3] Gold embodies so much value in the little mass that for ordinary transactions of commerce it would be thoroughly unfitted. Even now India is not rich for gold.[4] We know that India was also not much rich in silver because there are evidences that it was imported. Lallanji Gopal[5] observes that silver was unknown in the Ṛg-vedic period. In the later Saṁhitās its use does not seem to have become popular ; it is in the Brāhmaṇas that silver comes in for making different articles. It is, therefore, suggested that there is not much likelihood of the use of silver for making coins in the period of Saṁhitās. The contention of Cunningham, therefore, that the earliest Indian coins are of silver does not hold ground in view of the arguments placed above. These coins are called the punch-marked coins, which are found all over India from Kabul to the mouth of Gaṅgā and from the Himālayas to the Cape Comorin.[6] The value assigned to the Kārṣāpaṇa or copper punch-marked coins in the ancient law-books agrees exactly with that of the Kāhāu of the present day. The ancient Kāhāpaṇa was valued at 16 *paṇas* of Kauri or Cowree-shells, each *paṇa* being equal to 80 cowrees or the same number of rattis of copper.[7] The weight of the punch-marked coins, therefore, agrees with the weight as given in the literature. The Jātakas also

call the coin as Kāhāpaṇa, which is probably a Pali rendering of the Kārṣāpaṇa. What is meant by the "punch-marked" coins we need not explain. It is enough to say that on the basis of the technique of their manufacture, the earliest coins of India are given this name. The punch-marked coinage covers a long range or period, the limits of which are difficult to ascertain with absolute certainty in the present state of our knowledge. But since the religious significance of the symbols on the punch-marked coins here is the concern of the proposed study, the range of the period of circulation is not to be bothered with. The mode of fabrication is evident at once from an inspection of the coins. Cunningham[8] further observes that a piece of silver was first beaten out into a flat plate of about the thickness of a shilling, or some what thicker in later times. Narrow strips of about half an inch or more in width were cut off. Each strip was cut into separate pieces of the same weight, of about 56 grains and a final adjustment of weight was made by cutting small bits of the heavier blanks. The marks of the Chisel still remain on the edges of the thicker pieces, which were bro ken when the cut did not go clean through the strip of metal.[9]

The punch-marked coins came to be gradually replaced by cast and die-struck coins and the earliest cast coins can be ascribed to the 5th Century B.C.[10] Supporting the opinion of Brown, Chakraborthy says that the use of cast coins prevailed in some parts of the country from a very early time. It is learnt that the metal was cast for manufacturing the ornaments as early as the period of the Indus Valley civilization. This practice, therefore, must have been very old and indigenous in origin and the assertion of Brown that some of the copper cast coins were as old as the 5th Century B.C. could be accepted without fear of contradiction.[11] The cast coins are so-called because of the technique of their manufacture. We find casting the coins extensively in use. Sometimes the blanks of copper were cast in the mould and later on devices were punched upon them. "But the coins with the devices, which were not surely as sharp cut and clear, were manufactured by pouring molten metal into the mould."[12] As such a piece of copper was taken and melted. The molten metal was made to pass through the mould-frame, where it was moulded into the desired shape and impressed with the symbols. "A cavity was formed by joining two moulds together" and this appears to be a very ancient practice in India.[13] A few are blank on the reverse and, therefore, must have been the product of one mould.[14]

It has been suggested that the moulds were perhaps made of burnt clay or hard metal like bronze, stone or iron.[15] Each piece had to be cast separately but number of them might have been manufactured by a single casting.[16] In that case, the moulds were connected by narrow channels for the passage of the heated metal from one mould to another.[17] After the metal had cooled, the pieces were separated by breaking off the joints and the projections were not always obiiterated,[18] but two coins joined together in this way were found by Cunningham and are depicted in his book.[19] This system of casting the coins was preferred by the coin-makers because much alloy wsa

introduced in the metal, which consequently could not stand the blows from hammer.[20] The cast coins were all of copper and in this term Smith included its various alloys.[21] What we notice is the marked difference in the technique of manufacturing the punch-marked coins and the cast coins. The main difference between the techniques of manufacturing the punch-marked and the cast coins is that while the symbols were punched on the punch-marked coins after they were executed, in the case of the cast coins, the copper piece was melted and molten copper was made to pass through the mould frame in order to shape them as the mintmasters desired. Thus the cast coins are rightly called after the technique of manufacturing them. It has been noted earlier that the cast coins are later in date than the punch-marked coins and they can be dated as early as the 5th Century B.C. The devices were in intaglio in the moulds and were in relief on the coins and thus it obviated the need of punching the devices separately. Later on the full type supplanted the smaller symbols.[22]

These cast coins were discovered from a good number of places in northern India. Some of the States Kauśāmbī, Ayodhyā, Mathurā, etc., issued cast coins as late as the 3rd Century A.D., even though the system of die-striking had come into use in the North-west.[23] If we look at the period of circulation of these coins, we find it is quite early. In such an early period it becomes difficult for the students of iconography to make out the exact iconographic significance of the symbols and devices appearing on them. Still it is a fact that the devices on these coins bear some religious significance. They represent contemporary religious beliefs either of the issuer or of the people for whose use they circulated. The symbols on the cast coins are numerous and that they have definite religious significance is now a fact almost universally accepted. They (punch-marked and cast coins) are the authoritative records of the symbolism—religious, mythological and astronomical-current throughout India for many centuries.[24] India in ancient times had her own indigenous currency system. This system consists of the punch-marked coins, the cast coins and the die-struck coins. In point of time, the punch-marked coins are the earliest.[25] The numerous symbols on these coins have been interpreted variously and attempts have been made to prove affiliation of symbols appearing on these coins to various cults of ancient times. Coomaraswamy held the view that the symbols and devices appearing on these indigenous coins amount to explicit iconography. Thomas Burgon,[26] who based his study mainly on Greek and Roman coins, held the view that religion was the sole factor that motivated the issue of the coin-types right from the beginning of first striking of money down to the extinction of Byzantine empire. But his statement cannot be held to be absolutely correct. Differing from him, B.V. Head[27] held the view that the coin type simply was signet or guarantee of the issuer, a solemn affirmation on the part of the State or any other issuing authority that the coin was of just weight and genuine metal, a calling of the gods to witness against any fraud. According to him, the gods

were portrayed on the coins because they are considered to be the protectors of the State. Their heads or emblems alone were considered worthy of representation on coins. The figure of the god was invoked on the coins in order to win the confidence of the people, who had respect for the gods. Criticising this view, Ridgeway[28] held that many coin-types could be explained on the religious theory only by assuming forced and over subtle allusion. G.F. Hill[29] suggested that the coin-types, whatever their character might be, appeared on the coins as the badge or insignia by which alone the issuing authority could be recognised. That the types appearing on the early indigenous coins were selected because they served as the badge for the recognition of the issuing authority was also proposed and shown by G. Macdonald.[30] B. Chattopadhyay held the view that the coin types were selected in ancient times for portrayal on coins because of their importance in the economic life of the people. If any particular symbol or device had a vital role to play in the economic life of the people or the state, naturally it was selected as the device to be protrayed on the coins for circulation among the people. Gradually, in search of new devices on the large number of coins, religion motivated them in selecting the devices for portrayal on the coins. The religious background could be of great help to the numismatist in making a reasonable appreciation of the symbols appearing on the early Indian indigenous coinage. From the very beginning of history, mankind has been leading his life much close to the nature and natural objects. The state was not there as we see in modern times. Even if some kind of state or control of authority was there, the people were depending upon the nature for the fulfilment of the needs of their life. Evolution of coinage was much due to the necessity of the people, who felt difficulties in carrying on trade and commerce on an organised scale. Sun gave early men the light, vegetation gave them food, though they had started producing food but not in surplus amount. Rivers gave them water to drink and the skin of the animal was used for clothing and flesh was used for food. It was, therefore, nature to which man bowed down first and nature and natural objects constituted the first object of man's devotion that makes its appearance on the early Indian Indigenous coinage. There is little doubt with regard to the religious motive behind the representation of the deities and devices on the coins. Even the symbols representing some animals, trees or floral designs have been explained as auspicious signs held sacred by the religious sects. The early Indian indigenous coins, therefore, depict the symbols and devices, most of which were found associated with nature. Devotion to nature and natural objects was the first chapter in the history of religion. But the nature or natural objects alone were not the favourite subject of portraiture by the people on their early indigenous coins. Mankind in standing pose and various other marks of locality were also depicted. Animals including dogs are found depicted on the early indigenous coins. Were these animals depicted without any religious background? It is known that the dog is the *Vāhana* of Bhairava. It is also clear that the concept of

Bhairava had not emerged fully at the time of issuing these coins. But the emergence of the concept of Bhairava in the Brahmanical cult also was not a sudden development. It was the gradual process that led ultimately to the development of the idea of Bhairava. So in the representation of dog we can trace the idea of the people towards introducing Bhairava in the religion. Moreover, dog was associated with Lord Śiva in one of his many aspects. The utility of the dog as the watch of the house also cannot be denied. The utility of the dog in the life of the people for whose use these early indigenous coins were issued may also be listed as the motivating factor that led to his portrayal on the punch-marked and cast coins. There is no denying the fact that religion alone was not the motivating factor that led to the selection of deviced types for portrayal on the ancient coins. The utility of the type in the economic life of the people or the state, as stated earlier, was also among the several factors. Sometimes the coin types were selected for potrayal because they happened to be the canting badge of the state or the ruling chief, whosoever, he may be. The depiction of goat on the early indigenous coins may indicate the devotion of the issuer or of the people, for whom it was issued, towards the fire god via media his vehicle. Though it may be said that the goat had not become associated with the fire god as his mount but the development was not an over night process. The early literature, if probed fully, will prove that the goat was associated with Agni.[31] In these symbols we may detect the forms which early man in the infancy of our race adopted to give expression on a visible shape to their conceptions of the unseen, and to embody the crude but very widely spread beliefs which their speculations on such problems enabled them to evolve.[32]

For the purposes of classification, the symbols on the punch-marked coins may be broadly classified as follows :

Class I—The Human figures.

Class II—Implements, arms and works of men.

Class III—Animal figures among which more or less certainly recognised are elephant, rhinoceros, horse, bull, *nilagai*, goat, hare, dog, Jackal, peacock, river-turtle, Gangetic crocodile, frog, python, cobra and catfish or skate. Conspicuous by their absence may be mentioned the stage, i.e. any form of 'cervine ruminant'.

Class IV—Trees, branches or fruits. .Trees are usually represented enclosed within railings, sometimes supporting the chhatra or umbrella and sometimes one or more taurines. They are very conventional in design so that the species intended cannot be made out save in one or two instances.

Class V—Symbols connected with sun, planet or Śiva worship. This, according to Theobald, is a very numerous class comprehending the 'liṅgam', the triskelis, the caduceus and a vast number of symbols replete with esoteric allusions to the old planetary and solar conceptions of the remotest antiquity, comprehensively alluded to by Thomas as "Magic Formulae".

Class VI—Miscellaneous and unknown symbols.[33]

The devices on the punch-marked and the cast coins appear in a wonderful variety. More than three hundred symbols have been enumerated, comprising of human figures, arms, trees, birds, symbols of Buddhist worship, solar and planetary signs.[34]

Human Figures (Pls. IIIa, VII, X, XII)

The human figures are occasionally found on the punch-marked coins. On a coin from Kāmrej[35] we see a three-headed standing deity with a staff in the right hand and a *Kamaṇḍalu* in the left hand. The tree is depicted to the right of the deity. This three headed deity and the tree have been sought to be equated with the one on the obverse of a small circular coin.[36] The frog is observed in the same book. A frog is found represented on the seals from the Indus valley and ancient proto-historic traditions are continued in the punch-marked coins found from the Avanti region. Kāmrej is the headquarter of the taluka of that name in the Navasari district of the erstwhile Baroda state (now Gujarat). B Chattopadhyay says that the characteristic representation of the group of three human figures from one punch is not only found on the punch marked series but also on some coins from Ujjayini. On another copper cast coin from Ujjayini[37] we find the feet of a draped figure, marching to the left. The Legend *Mahiṣa* in Brāhmī of the 3rd Century B.C. is also found. Next we have a rudely executed human figure with the dumb-bell symbol on either side. A human figure, little in size, is represented vigorously in a dancing posture with two hands uplifted. A figure of Hanumān, the monkey-god, appears on one coin[38] On an uninscribed cast coin from Kauśāmbī,[39] we find three human figures standing, the central one has raised both its hands and holds an arrow in its left hand. The figure on the left, which looks like a female, holds one hand down and the other is upraised. This coin may be tentatively assigned to the 3rd—2nd century B.C.[40] This coin published by A.S. Altekar is of some religious significance. The central figure, depicted as having raised his both hands and holding an arrow in the left one, is probably paying tribute to the female figure on the left, who is the representative of Mother-cult. The female figure may be extending the benediction by raising one of her hands. The concept of mankind bowing down before Mother Goddess for boon is prevalent right from the prehistoric times. The central male figure may be conjectured as praying for boon by raising his both arms and indicating his helplessness before the female figure i.e. Mother Goddess, who is all powerful, the symbol of *Śakti* or strength and prowess. This indicates the total surrender of mankind before the Mother Goddess Even if it may not be the figures of a Mother Goddess, mankind bows before the mother for blessings. Mother in Indian literature has been a source of all bliss and benediction. The blessings should be given by raising one of her hands, which should be most probably her right hand. As early as the Indus valley period, we find definite evidence of the Mother Goddess having been venerated by the people. Man has always recognised in woman-folk the power of blessings and fertility. In Mahābhārata,

the mother of Duryodhana blessed him to become as strong as stone, whlch was the secret of his success in werstling.

Theobald suggested that the group of three human figures comprises of one man and two women. On the other hand, D.R. Bhandarkar's suggestion put forward in connection with his discussion on excavations at Besnagar points out[41] that the three figures are to be indentified with the *ratnas* adorning a Rājā-cakravartin viz. *strī*, *grhapati* and *pariṇāyaka*. But doubts have been raised as to the identity of the symbols on the basis of the study of the coins. B. Chattopadhyay takes them to be three women engaged in conversation with each other.[42] While the two women figures with braided hair are found looking at each other with their left hand on their waist and right hand hanging downwards, the women on the right side with dishevelled hair and two hands hanging downwards is found looking at the other two and listening to them. This represents efforts on the part of the numismatists to depict a scene from the day-to-day life.[43] The three figures from separate punches are so conventionalised in their representation that it is difficult to identify them either as men or women.[44] However, we find some hook like objects attached either with one of the hands or both the hands belonging to some of these figures. Apparently the figures are found to have been carrying something from one place to another. This is again another example of an artistic representation, though very rudely, of an event from day-to-day life of the people. It is doubtful whether the human figure, standing holding a staff and pot in two hands may be identified with a deity, although Allan has tried to identify it with Skanda Kārttikeya. On the analogy of the coins of Ujjayini,[45] it is not safe to assume that the staff in the hand is to be regarded as a spear, which is the characteristic attribute of Kārttikeya. Rather it would not be wrong to identify the figure with that of Viśvāmitra Śiva as suggested by J.N. Banerjea.[46] As a deity, Śiva in the guise of Viśvāmitra was well-known before 4th Century B.C. more than Kārttikeya. It may be held that the figure on the punch-marked coin is just a representation of a Brāhmiṇ by a prominent *Śikhā* on the back of the head. The rudely made human figure with the two dumb bells on either side is again a conventionalised representation without any scope of indentification.

Hanumān

The appearance of Hanumān, the monkey-god, on a coin,[47] as suggested by Allan, does not seem to be beyond doubt. Because the coin, which shows the particular figure, is not so well executed that it can provide us with a clear representation of the figure under reference here.

Durga Prasad first tried to point out the similarity of symbols on the punch-marked coins with those found on the seals discovered from the Indus Valley cities. The group of three-human figures either from one punch or from several punches is compared with Mohen-jo-dāro seal No. 1[48] and seal No. B 426.[49] Dr. C.L. Fabri[50] has shown a collection of 'man sign' occurring on both the punch-marked coins and the Indus Valley seals. Distinction is made among men with arms hanging down or raised, a man carrying an object and

a row of men holding each other's hand on the punch-marked coins and the Mohen-jo-dāro seals. Fabri says : "All these minor details must strike every-one something more than accidental agreement." The human figures on the punch-marked coins have been sought to be explained earlier as conventionalis-ed representations. But the practice of portraying human figures in the conventionalised form on the punch-marked coins appears to have been genuinely derived from the Proto-historic art. The human figure made a cross with two slanting lines attached. At the bottom of it seems to have been the convention of representing human figures in the symbolic form. In most cases, the two sides of the horizontal line in the cross are found to be either slanting downwards or rarely upwards. The head of the figure is shown by a dot on the top of the vertical line in the cross. It is from the symbolical art of the Drāviḍians and Kolarians that this mode of representation in the folk art was derived. It becomes, therefore, perfectly clear that the practice of depicting human figure with or without any religious significance can be traced from the period as early as the Indus Valley civilization, which coincidentally found continuity in the punch-marked coins in most probability.

Weapons and Tools (Pls. II, IVb, V, VI, IX, X, XII, XIV)

Man is always described as a dynamic animal, who moves from techno-logy to technology. The punch-marked coins and the cast coins depict on them a number of weapons and tools, which were probably made and used by them for their purposes. Among these tools, mention may be made of a bolt like object, the bow and the arrow, the steelyard, the wheel and a special variety of wheel with spokes projecting outwards, which seems to be a water-vessel.[51] The bow and arrow also is to be noticed on a series of the Sātavāhana coins from Kolhapur.[52] These coins, however, belong to a dynasty entirely different from, the Sātāvahanas, which may for the convenience be called Kura. On the ob-verse of the coins of Kṣaharāta Bhūmaka, we find arrow pointing downwards,[53] while the arrow fitted with bow string is found pointing upwards on the reverse of the Sātavāhana coins. The reverse of the coins issued by Kṣatrapa Rāja Nahapāna depicts arrow pointing downward.[54] The arrow sign occurring on the punch-marked coins has its counterpart in the Indus sign.[55] That an arrow is meant will become clear from the sign No. 378 given by C.L. Fabri for examination. It is known that the people in the pre-historic days lived mainly by hunting. Of course, cultivation had started but the depiction of arrow with bow-string probably reminds us that the habit of hunting and the implements used for the purpose had not died out. At the present state of our knowledge it is difficult to ascertain the religious significance of this particular symbol. In Bhāravī's *Kirātārjuniyam* Śiva appears in the form of a Kirāta holding bow and arrow. Bow and arrow, therefore, may be identified as the attributes of Lord Śiva. From the *Rāmāyaṇa*, it is known that the bow was favourite to Śiva, the breaking of which was a cause for Śiva's anger. He was known as Pinākin. The appearance of Śiva in the form of an archer can be noticed on a coin of Huviṣka, the Kuṣāṇa king. B. Chattopadhyay[56] opines the bow and

arrow are the attributes of Skanda-Kārttikeya also, who is described in the Purāṇas as the war-general of the divine army. He further adds that the bow and arrow became associated with Kārttikeya during mediaeval period. Shall we not be doing injustice to the field of iconography if we compare the iconic representation of Kārttikeya of the mediaeval period with one on the punch-marked coins, which are of a date much earlier than that. Moreover, **Śakti** (spear), and not bow and arrow, is the emblem par excellence of Lord Kārttikeya.

Trident is a prominent symbol on both the punch-marked and the cast coins. On the obverse and reverse of a coin found from Kāmrej,[57] hill, dots, crescent and a trident on a base appear. To the shaft is added the sharp edge of an axe. The reverse depicts dotted circular border, dots and tree etc. A new variety of Ujjayini coin depicts on its obverse a trident-like symbol in place of a deity, which is generally found on these coins ; besides there is a tree in railing and river with fish below.[58] The trident on the coin under reference here appears with an axe attached to it. Besides, a hill and crescent also appear. We know that the mountain was the permanent abode of Śiva and, therefore, he was known as Girīśa or Śriṅgīn. The trident battle-axe with hill and crescent (Śiva is known as Śaśāṅkaśekhara) simply confirms that the device in question has śivite association. Another new variety of coin from Ujjayinī is also on the same footing. The figure of the deity appears to have been replaced by the trident, which stood for the aniconic representation of Śiva. The tree in railing on the reverse is relevant because mountain, which is known as the permanent abode of Śiva, has many trees. The fruits and roots of certain trees are often used as drugs. The entire picture on the coin gives us a picture of Śaivism, traceable in ancient times. The river with a fish below the mountain indicates that the former originates from a mountain and the river is the place, where fish live. Fish is even now held to be a very sacred object for the people. The coin, therefore, presents before us a complete picture of Śiva-worship and things that originate from a mountain.

Among other works and implements of man a figure like is prominent, and, according to Fabri, this could be termed as the thunderbolt or axe.[59] About the religious significance of the device, nothing can be said definitely. What can be said about it is that this symbol may represent the artifact made by the contemporary man for hunting or other such usages. We should not always insist on emphatically making out some religious significance of this device. It may be a fact that later on *Vajra* or thunderbolt, as it is called, became associated with Indra as his emblem par-excellence.

Various other works and implements of man would be explained when dealing with their significance in the relevant context.

Animal Figures : (Pls. I—XII, XIV—XV)

The punch-marked and the cast coins, as already seen, depict a good number of animals. A number of factors appear to have motivated the

mintmasters or the issuers to depict the animals. Firstly, the animals stood for the theriomorphic representations of the deities. Each and every deity had an animal as his *vāhana* which was a later development in the field of religion. This fact is almost universally admitted. But during the time, when the iconic concept of a deity had not emerged fully, the animal stood for his/her theriomorphic representations. Secondly, animals play a very important role in the state economy and they were of tremendous utility to the people in the field of agriculture, transportation and warfare, etc. It is, therefore, the utilitarian role of the animals in the economy of the state that motivated the mintmasters to depict a number of animals on both the obverse and the reverse of the coins. For example, the bull is frequently portrayed on coins. In the early Vedic literature, Indra is identified with the bull. The bull here is indicative of the prowess and the strength which helps the animal plough vast area of land. The horse played a very brave role in the warfare of ancient times. Likewise, ass and other animals may have been very useful in respect of transportation. The depiction of such animals on the coins, which were of tremendous utility to the society, was in all probability intended only to emphasise their usefulness to the state economy in the early period of history, when religion may not have been the prime motivating factor behind their portraiture on coins. The utility of these animals led to their association with religion firstly as the theriomorphic representation of a particular deity and later as the vehicle of that deity, whose theriomorphic representative this animal was.

The animal motifs played no doubt a very important role in the development of Indian art and iconography. The reason is this that the mythologies embedded in different religions derived most probably from the primitive mythology and the mythology of these religions upheld characteristic attributes and faculties of different species of animals.[60] The position of the great elephant 'Airāvata', having huge body with two pair of white tusks, who was chosen by the holder of thunderbolt, i.e., Indra, as his *Vāhana* may be traced in the *Mahābhārata*.[61]

The animal that occurs on the punch-marked coins most numerically is the bull.[62] On a coin, the bull appears with a hump. The bull with a hump in particular is known to be sacred to Śiva. When we study the representation of the animal motifs on the silver punch-marked coins and the cast coins, we may recall the animal symbolism crowning the Asokan pillars. A group of animals such as the elephant (the guardian of the east), the horse (the guardian of the south), the bull (guardian of the west) and the lion (guardian of the north) constituted the crowning sculptures of the monolithic columns, which were erected during the time of Aśoka, the great.[63] The animal motifs were extensively made use of as attractive things of art, signifying some ideas associated with the religious faith, for which the said art and architecture were created. It would be interesting to suggest that the animal motifs were used as symbols of religious beliefs professed by the pre-Aryan primitive people and

later on those came to be used as symbols of different cults growing in the historic period. People had belief in animism and the faith in animism led the people in the past to imagine the presence of a spirit behind each and every natural phenomenon and object. The animals were also not left outside the scope of this belief.[61]

Bull as a symbol on the punch-marked and the cast coins is variously interpreted. When the bull is associated with a *liṅgam*, there can be no doubt that the bull Nandī is intended, as the attitude of the animal on the coins is that in which Nandī is represented in almost every temple of Mahādeva.[65] *Indra in the Ṛg-veda is* constantly designated as a bull, a term much less frequently applied to Agni and occasionally to other gods such as Dyaus.[66] In the *Atharva-veda*,[67] a bull is addressed as Indra, and in the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, the bull is stated to be Indra's form.[68] In the *Avesta* also, the bull appears as one of the incarnations of Verethraghna, the Avestan Indra.[69] In one of the Vedic rituals, a bull also represents the god Rudra.[70] The identity of Rudra-Śiva with the bull is significant, though late one. Viṣṇu has also been described as the bull. In the Iranian legend of the pre-Avestan time, the chief act of Mithra was to capture and slay the primeval bull from the blood of which all life sprang.[71] In the *Ṛg-veda* again Pārjanya, who has been equated with the raining cloud, is compared with the bull that impregnates everything.[72] It is noticed that the bull had association with different deities. It is also suggested that in the primitive mythology there existed connection between the Mother-Goddess or 'Lady of Beasts' and the primeval Bull as her consort.

The superhuman power connected with the animal world was considered as the potent factor in fecundating the Mother-Goddess and gave origin to the totemistic belief ; but the powers were gradually usurped by the male human spirit and transfused in the male-archaic gods. The well-known representation of Paśupati or 'Lord of Beasts' seated in Yogic posture, with three faces and a pair of huge horns on his head and surrounded by wild animals, is found carved on a seal discovered in the Indus valley.[73] It seems to indicate the transitional phase in which the predominant position of the Mother-Goddess was being occupied by the Father-god. Recognition of the bull as the emblem of Śiva Paśupati in art and iconography of the historic period establishes beyond dispute the dominant position held by the male-god. This view of Chattopadhyay appears to be near truth as there are evidences which lend support to the theory of the dominance of the Mother-cult in the Indus valley civilization. The clay-images of Mother-Goddess hanging on the walls of the houses during the period of the Harappan civilisation indicate that the Mother cult was dominant in the society and religion of that period. It was of late that the bull finally became associated with Lord Śiva as his vehicle.

The bull figures represented on the punch-marked and the cast coins are an improvement on their counterpart in the Harappan seals in the sense that the figure in question could be presumed to have Śivite association with some

amount of certainty. It is because the period of the circulation of the punch-marked coins and the cast coins is later than the Harappan civilisation. The religious idea and conception in that period was in a fluid state. On the obverse of a cast coin, we find the bull depicted running to the right in high relief. There is a three-arched crescented hill above.[74] That the symbol is Śivite in character is to be the least doubted. Foucher is of opinion that the bull stands for the Buddha's human birth, as the traditional date of his birth was the day of full moon of Vaiśākha, when the Zodiacal sign of Taurus, i.e., the bull, was the dominant sign.[75] Bull was represented in association with various symbols such as mountain, tree within railing, etc. The meaning of bull's association will change in many contexts.

Elephant was another animal that made its appearance on both the punch-marked and the cast coins either independently or in association with other symbols. The elephant walking to the right with peculiar three-pronged symbol in front appears on a particular punch-marked coin.[76] The three characteristic symbols Nandī, Nandīpada and elephant are found depicted on the punch-marked coins from very early times.[77] The figures on the coins are of a crude primitive style. On the obverse of an uninscribed cast coin from Ujjayini,[78] the elephant appears in association with a triangle headed standard, Svastika, taurine and ladder like symbol.

On the coin under study we find a jumble of devices and it appears extremely difficult to weave any sort of correlation among the symbols and devices appearing on the coins. This is not the solitary coin where we have such a large number of symbols. These symbols are entirely different in respect of their meaning as to the religious significance. It may be that the issuers of these coins or the people for whom they were issued were not rigid. They were tolerant and of accommodating spirit. If on the one hand Svastika has definite solar association, the elephant is the symbol of royalty and fortune. The white elephant is described as rain-giving clouds. Indra is described as clothed in might like the elephant.[79]

Indra is further described as the mighty lord of lords and the elephant is the symbol of might. This will explain why the elephant in the later stage of history is found associated with Indra as his vehicle. But the elephant is not the exclusive emblem of Lord Indra. In the later period, we find Lakṣmī associated with elephant in her Gaja Lakṣmī aspect, where she is depicted as being bathed by the elephants. It will be further explained that the elephant represented the fortune and royalty. As the elephant was described as the rain-giving cloud, it was certainly symbolic of the growth of fortune and because it was mighty, it was adopted by the Devarāja Indra as has *Vāhana*. Kings are mighty and, therefore, their symbol must be 'might', which was definitely represented by the elephant. The elephant tusk itself was valuable asset of the royal treasury and, therefore, the adoption of the elephant as the symbol of royalty and fortune was neither unusual nor against the iconographic

traditions. Besides the elephant may indicate coins struck at the royal mint.[80] The elephant is noticed on the coins preserved in the British Museum. The elephant on one coin is holding its trunk upraised and tusks down[81] and on another the elephant is seen with tusks upraised and trunk hanging downwards.[82] An elephant surrounded by a small taurine is very rare and and only occurs as a counter mark on the reverse of a well-known type.[83] The elephant on yet another coin[84] is portrayed as facing to left with a rider on its back. The main interest of this coin is that the rider is clearly seen and this feature had not been noticed either by Cunningham or Smith. The elephant in association with other symbols[85] and the elephant holding the branch of a tree[86] are also portrayed on the coins. The elephant with the branch of a tree also appears in association with taurine, Svastika and triangular headed symbol.

From the study of the Buddhist literature, it is learnt that the Buddha entered the womb-cell of his mother in the form of a white elephant. So the elephant is often interpreted as the symbol of Buddhism also. But this interpretation is not beyond dispute because literature on Buddhism may have been compiled at a comparatively later stage. Moreover, the elephant appearing on the punch-marked and the cast coins has not always religious significance. The elephant on coins may indicate the flora and fauna prevalent in the region, where the coins were in circulation. It is a proven fact that man in early part of history depended on nature and its objects for the fulfilment of his needs. The elephant was an object of nature and, hence, the depiction.

Rhinoceros

The marks on the punch-marked coins include the rhinoceros.[87] These signs (*rūpa*) forming an extensive repertory appear to have been those of issuing and ratifying authorities. Many of these symbols are those of particular deities, for example the three-peaked mountain with crescent is otherwise known to have been a symbol of Śiva and so also of the bull.[88] The rhinoceros constitutes a characteristic symbol on one group of coins.[89] It survived in the Punjab down to the 6th Century A.D. The horn is always represented as curved forward as on the unicorn of the Mohen-jo-dāro seals. What was the religious significance of this animal ? This animal had probably no religious significance except that it was a ferocious animal. The role an animal played served as a motivating factor in leading the mintmasters to depict them. The depiction of this animal on the punch-marked coins may indicate the type of fauna and flora florishing in the region.

Horse

The horse rarely made its appearance on the punch-marked and the cast coins. It is surprising why the horse did not find favour with the mintmasters for portraiture when the sun-symbol and its numerous variants are noticed on the early indigenous coinage of India. Two animals, which are found on other series of Indian coins, the lion and the horse, are not found here.[90] It is known that the horse was used for drawing the car of the sun-god.

amount of certainty. It is because the period of the circulation of the punch-marked coins and the cast coins is later than the Harappan civilisation. The religious idea and conception in that period was in a fluid state. On the obverse of a cast coin, we find the bull depicted running to the right in high relief. There is a three-arched crescented hill above.[74] That the symbol is Śivite in character is to be the least doubted. Foucher is of opinion that the bull stands for the Buddha's human birth, as the traditional date of his birth was the day of full moon of Vaiśākha, when the Zodiacal sign of Taurus, i.e., the bull, was the dominant sign.[75] Bull was represented in association with various symbols such as mountain, tree within railing, etc. The meaning of bull's association will change in many contexts.

Elephant was another animal that made its appearance on both the punch-marked and the cast coins either independently or in association with other symbols. The elephant walking to the right with peculiar three-pronged symbol in front appears on a particular punch-marked coin.[76] The three characteristic symbols Nandī, Nandīpada and elephant are found depicted on the punch-marked coins from very early times.[77] The figures on the coins are of a crude primitive style. On the obverse of an uninscribed cast coin from Ujjayini,[78] the elephant appears in association with a triangle headed standard, Svastika, taurine and ladder like symbol.

On the coin under study we find a jumble of devices and it appears extremely difficult to weave any sort of correlation among the symbols and devices appearing on the coins. This is not the solitary coin where we have such a large number of symbols. These symbols are entirely different in respect of their meaning as to the religious significance. It may be that the issuers of these coins or the people for whom they were issued were not rigid. They were tolerant and of accommodating spirit. If on the one hand Svastika has definite solar association, the elephant is the symbol of royalty and fortune. The white elephant is described as rain-giving clouds. Indra is described as clothed in might like the elephant.[79]

Indra is further described as the mighty lord of lords and the elephant is the symbol of might. This will explain why the elephant in the later stage of history is found associated with Indra as his vehicle. But the elephant is not the exclusive emblem of Lord Indra. In the later period, we find Lakṣmī associated with elephant in her Gaja Lakṣmī aspect, where she is depicted as being bathed by the elephants. It will be further explained that the elephant represented the fortune and royalty. As the elephant was described as the rain-giving cloud, it was certainly symbolic of the growth of fortune and because it was mighty, it was adopted by the Devarāja Indra as has *Vāhana.* Kings are mighty and, therefore, their symbol must be 'might', which was definitely represented by the elephant. The elephant tusk itself was valuable asset of the royal treasury and, therefore, the adoption of the elephant as the symbol of royalty and fortune was neither unusual nor against the iconographic

traditions. Besides the elephant may indicate coins struck at the royal mint.[80] The elephant is noticed on the coins preserved in the British Museum. The elephant on one coin is holding its trunk upraised and tusks down[81] and on another the elephant is seen with tusks upraised and trunk hanging downwards.[82] An elephant surrounded by a small taurine is very rare and and only occurs as a counter mark on the reverse of a well-known type.[83] The elephant on yet another coin[84] is portrayed as facing to left with a rider on its back. The main interest of this coin is that the rider is clearly seen and this feature had not been noticed either by Cunningham or Smith. The elephant in association with other symbols[85] and the elephant holding the branch of a tree[86] are also portrayed on the coins. The elephant with the branch of a tree also appears in association with taurine, Svastika and triangular headed symbol.

From the study of the Buddhist literature, it is learnt that the Buddha entered the womb-cell of his mother in the form of a white elephant. So the elephant is often interpreted as the symbol of Buddhism also. But this interpretation is not beyond dispute because literature on Buddhism may have been compiled at a comparatively later stage. Moreover, the elephant appearing on the punch-marked and the cast coins has not always religious significance. The elephant on coins may indicate the flora and fauna prevalent in the region, where the coins were in circulation. It is a proven fact that man in early part of history depended on nature and its objects for the fulfilment of his needs. The elephant was an object of nature and, hence, the depiction.

Rhinoceros

The marks on the punch-marked coins include the rhinoceros.[87] These signs (*rūpa*) forming an extensive repertory appear to have been those of issuing and ratifying authorities. Many of these symbols are those of particular deities, for example the three-peaked mountain with crescent is otherwise known to have been a symbol of Śiva and so also of the bull.[88] The rhinoceros constitutes a characteristic symbol on one group of coins.[89] It survived in the Punjab down to the 6th Century A.D. The horn is always represented as curved forward as on the unicorn of the Mohen-jo-dāro seals. What was the religious significance of this animal ? This animal had probably no religious significance except that it was a ferocious animal. The role an animal played served as a motivating factor in leading the mintmasters to depict them. The depiction of this animal on the punch-marked coins may indicate the type of fauna and flora florishing in the region.

Horse

The horse rarely made its appearance on the punch-marked and the cast coins. It is surprising why the horse did not find favour with the mintmasters for portraiture when the sun-symbol and its numerous variants are noticed on the early indigenous coinage of India. Two animals, which are found on other series of Indian coins, the lion and the horse, are not found here.[90] It is known that the horse was used for drawing the car of the sun-god.

Although the horse is not noticed by Allan, it appears on the reverse of a square copper coin.[91] The horse is depicted as galloping to the left, with a star above. It is all in a sunken square. Apart from the religious significance of the horse, it might have played an important role in the economy and warfare activities. The utility of horse to the society and economy may also have motivated the mintmasters to depict it on the coins. It is a fact that the religious importance had not been fully grasped by the people of that time. The horse which replaced other animals as the main offering in sacrificial rites was ultimately anthropomorphised as the twin gods of agriculture, Aśvins, who with the knowledge of the secrets of the plant life, transform themselves as the physicians of the gods. They were the givers of health, youth and fecundity and source of abundance in food, men and gods.[92] The solar deities of the vedic period viz. Sūrya, Savitṛ, Bhaga, Pūṣan and others had horse as their symbols.[93] These deities were invoked to appear on their cars drawn by steeds in the sacrificial ceremonies. From the study of the Buddhist legends, we learn that prince Siddhārtha left home on horse back (Kanṭhaka). Therefore, in Buddhism the horse stands for the symbol of renunciation.[94] But the fact of horse being a symbol of renunciation appears to have been a later development. It may be conjectured that the very important role played by the horse in the economic life and war led to its association with religion and upliftment at a later period of history.

Nilagai

On some coins, an animal is seen without horns and with somewhat finer head than an ordinary bovine and it seems not improbable that the cow of the 'blue bull' (Portax) may have been intended.[95] It is very difficult to make out the significance of this animal on the punch-marked coins. It may indicate the area where such type of fauna existed. We do not find any definite reference to this animal in the Vedic Index or the Vedic Mythology.

Goat

The goat occurs on the punch-marked coins and the cast coins. On the obverse of a punch-marked coin[96] there appears an animal, which has always a vase on its side above it; Theobald (no. 224) describes this animal as a goat browsing on a vine. The coin in possession of Theobald provides the animal with two straight horns and two very conventional or round ears, and below it is figured a kid with the same conventional round ears but no horns. The upright staff in front of it, with berries down each side may represent a vine, conventionally in which case the goat is probably represented in the act of browsing on the vines as the goats are fond of doing.[97] The animal, according to Allan, certainly seems to be horned but that it is a goat is doubtful. But the animal in question appears to be in affinity with the goat. The identity of the animal is, however, difficult to ascertain. Assuming it to be a goat, it was of importance in the Vedic religion. Ajā Ekapāda was of religious importance and was offered worship.[98]

The aegis (i.e. the goat-skin) was used to cover the shoulder of the Greek deities. The goat is specially connected with Pūṣan as drawing his car in the *Ṛg veda*.[99] In the later Vedic literature, the goat has several times been connected or identified with Agni.[100] In the absence of any contemporary literary evidence, it is not proper to say anything about the animal. This much we can say that the goat is even now offered as sacrifice to the gods to propitiate them. What after all made the people select the goat as offering to the god? It may not have been a sudden development and in the portraiture of the goat on the early indigenous coin, we may trace the utmost regard which the people had for this animal.

Hare

A punch-marked coin hailing from Paila[101] in the Kheri district of Uttar Pradesh portrays a hare seated on its haunches. This coin was examined by E.H.C. Walsh, who took this animal to be a hare and not the dog because the hare is associated with the moon (*Śaśi*) and also because of its sticking up ears and short up curved scut of tail About the hare. Theobald says that it refers of course to the relation in the Hindu mythology between the Moon and the hare, the mythical hare being undoutedly moon. Gubernatis quotes one Buddhist legend in which the hare is described as having been translated to the moon, as a reward for its having bestowed hospitably on Indra, in the guise of a pilgrim, its own flesh to eat, no other food being available.[102] This will explain the significance of hare. A punch-marked coin in the British Museum[103] depicts a rabbit in a crescent, which presumably represents the crescent moon.

Dog

The punch-marked coins depict on their faces a galaxy of animals, which includes the dog. We all know that the dog is a very useful animal in the society. The utility of the dog probably led the people in the past to domesticate it. The dog is portrayed both independently and in association with other symbols on early indigenous coins. The dog is noticed on the punch-marked coins hailing from Bhagalpur in Bihar.[104] Elsewhere, the dog is depicted on the summit of a *stūpa*.[105] In this symbol, a dog is seen standing on the *stūpa* in an energetic attitude as though barking. What the precise meaning of the dog is in this situation, it is not easy to say. The figure of a dog in connection with the Buddhist *Stūpa* recalls to mind the use to which the animal was put to in the bleak high-lands of Asia as the preferential form of Sepulchre, over exposure to birds and wild beasts, in the case of deceased monks or persons of position in Tibet.[106] The dog is here portrayed in the act of guarding the *stūpa*, which contained the mortal remains. In the Brāhmaṇical religion, Bhairava, one of the terrific aspects of Śiva, was often accompanied by the dog.[107] A four-armed figure of Baṭuka Bhairava is found accompanied by a dog.[108] But the sculpture which has been adduced here in evidence is of a much later date. The dog is found in the *Ṛg-veda* mythologically in the form of the two brindled hounds of Yama called Sārameya.[109]

Although the horse is not noticed by Allan, it appears on the reverse of a square copper coin.[91] The horse is depicted as galloping to the left, with a star above. It is all in a sunken square. Apart from the religious significance of the horse, it might have played an important role in the economy and warfare activities. The utility of horse to the society and economy may also have motivated the mintmasters to depict it on the coins. It is a fact that the religious importance had not been fully grasped by the people of that time. The horse which replaced other animals as the main offering in sacrificial rites was ultimately anthropomorphised as the twin gods of agriculture, Aśvins, who with the knowledge of the secrets of the plant life, transform themselves as the physicians of the gods. They were the givers of health, youth and fecundity and source of abundance in food, men and gods.[92] The solar deities of the vedic period viz. Sūrya, Savitṛ, Bhaga, Pūṣan and others had horse as their symbols.[93] These deities were invoked to appear on their cars drawn by steeds in the sacrificial ceremonies. From the study of the Buddhist legends, we learn that prince Siddhārtha left home on horse back (Kanṭhaka). Therefore, in Buddhism the horse stands for the symbol of renunciation.[94] But the fact of horse being a symbol of renunciation appears to have been a later development. It may be conjectured that the very important role played by the horse in the economic life and war led to its association with religion and upliftment at a later period of history.

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What was the exact significance of portraying the dog on the punch-marked coins is difficult to ascertain. We have seen earlier, it was probably the utility of the horse that led the mintmasters to depict it on the coins. It is also worthy of note that the dog is not portrayed frequently.

Jackal

The jackal was among the animals that made rare appearance on the coins. Allan cites a doubtful appearance of jackal on a hill.[110]

Peacock

The peacock also made its appearance on the punch-marked coins. The peacock on a hill is to be rarely found on the punch-marked coins. Theobald takes it as the peacock on the top of a *stūpa*.[111] Had this bird appeared idependently, it would have been sought to be interpreted as the theriomorphic representation of Skanda-Kārttikeya. But it appears on the top of a mountain, which Theobald conjectures as the *stūpa*. A close scrutiny of the figure in the British Museum catalogue would indicate that it is a peacock standing on the top of a mountain, which appears to be made apparently of five-arches.[112] It does not come to our understanding as to what the mintmaster wanted to convey by depicting the peacock on the top of a *stūpa*. Theobald suggests that in the device we have an animal connected with Indra watching over the *stūpa*. As the peacock yearly sheds and renews his glorious plumes, there may possibly lie hidden an esoteric allusion to a life beyond the grave; but it is more probable that it is used simply as an emblematic animal, being covered with spots, in which one brand of the Āryan family saw the eyes of the unfortunate Aryans, while in India the same spots would represent the stigma with Indra was covered when the saint's curse fell upon him. The peacock is, however, appropriately sacred to Indra, from the loud cry with which it greets and seems to call for the rain.

Owl

A punch-marked coin from the hoard of sixty-five silver punch marked coins in the Nagpur Museum bears on its obverse a symbol, which has not so far been noticed on any other coin.[113] It is an owl (*Uluka*). The only bird, so far definitely identified on the punch-marked coins is peacock, which is seen in the composite symbol of peacock on hill. The owl, therefore, is a new bird symbol. In the *Ṛg-veda*, the owl is spoken of as messenger of Yama.[114] In tne *Sūtras*, the owl is the messenger of evil spirits.[115] It, therefore, appears that the owl, being an ominous animal, was the representative of the evil forces.

Tortoise

Tortoise[116] surrounded by a circle appears on a punch-marked coin found from Kośala, now housed in the Allahabad Museum.

Frog

Cunningham notices a frog on a punch-marked coin.[117] We see a frog represented on some Mohen-jo-dāro seals and on the punch-marked coins.[118] Frogs awakened by the rains are the object of a panegyric as bestowing cows and long life and seem to be conceived as possessing powers.[119] Bergaigne interprets the frogs as meteorological phenomena[120] In the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, Prajāpati is described as changing himself into a tortoise in which form he produced all creatures. This assumed the form of creator in the post-Vedic mythology, becoming the Tortoise Incarnation of Viṣṇu. In the *Taittiriya Saṁhitā* (2.6.3.), the sacrificial cake (*Puroḍāśa*) is said to have become a tortoise. Should we trace in the tortoise on coins the beginning of this importance, which later made tortoise as an incarnation of Viṣṇu or simple indication of the fauna which existed in the area where the coins were in circulation.

Fish

Other animals appearing on the punch-marked coins include fish,[121] lion, tiger and leopard, cobra etc. Fish on the punch-marked coins are portrayed in various ways. The commonest type is that representing two or four fishes in the tank.[122] Fish has always been a very auspicious object to the people in the past and the sight of a fish when on journey is even now described as auspicious. In the later Purāṇas we find fish as the incarnation of Viṣṇu.

Lion

A cast coin depicts on its obverse a lion facing a tree in railing.[123] The lion springing to left with tail curved above and hair standing on head is portrayed on another coin.[124] We find that the lion, tiger and leopard were often portrayed on the early indigenous coins. The lion was a fearful animal and the scene, where he is depicted in the act of looking towards the tree may be interpreted in the way that even the evil power or the symbol of terror, i.e. the lion or the tiger is doing obeisance to the tree god. The tree god is represented by the tree on the coin. It was the power of destruction and creating terror that probably led Durgā, the goddess of valour, to adopt the lion as her mount in the later stage of iconography. The living-beings of the world have always bowed down before the forces of nature and the scene of lion looking towards the tree in the railing may have been intended to emphasize that idea. That the tree was held sacred and represented some divine spirit is reinforced by the railing which is put around the tree. The lion figures independently also in some cases, where it may be sought to be interpreted as the show of the power of terror which the lion personifies. It may indicate the fauna also.

Snake

The animals that are forces of terror include the snake. The snake appears on the obverse of cast coin.[125] The punch-marked coins hailing from

Paila in the Kheri district of U. P. depict three-serpents round a central boss.[126] The serpents occur on all the present coins. It does not occur on the Five Marks that appear on the punch-marked coins. It may, therefore, be taken as the distinctive mark of the Kośaladeśa.[127]

Serpent has the power of creating terror and that would explain why this noxious animal was portrayed on the coins. That this dreaded animal was not liked by the people may be deduced from the fact that they are rarely met with on the early indigenous coins. Vṛtra was the designation of the dreaded serpent, who probably received his name as a formidable enemy of mankind enveloping his prey like a serpent in his coils.[128] The Vṛtra-Slayer Indra, who is also called the serpent slayer, is said to have slain the serpent, the identity of Ahi and Vṛtra being clear where the terms interchange. The waters are also described as encompassed by the serpent, the action being expressed by the root 'Vr' among others.[129] The serpent, however, also appears as a divine being in the form of Ahirbudhnya, who seems to represent the beneficent side of the character of Ahivṛtra. It is, thus, the terrific aspect of snake that led to its portrayal on the coins. That Śiva was accompanied by snakes as his ornaments is also intended to emphasize his terrific aspect. The serpent, therefore, in the early part of history represented all that was evil, which led to its portraiture on the early indigenous coins. However, the snake coil was used by Viṣṇu for his rest. The early indigenous coins, therefore, portray both types of animals, genteel and terrific in character.

Trees (Pls. V-XII, XIV)

The society in ancient India had her developed religion, which venerated not only the gods and the supernatural forces but also the tree, which is believed to have represented the divine spirit. The tree worship is as old as the ancient Indian civilisation. We know that the trees were very useful to mankind. In the early period, mankind used to cover his body with the leaves and barks of trees, got from trees fruits, which formed part of his food and the trees used to give shade to the mankind. Above all, the leaves and the fruits of the trees and their many things served as the ingredients of drugs that cured many diseases. The seals from Harappā and Mohen-jo-dāro represent a number of trees, which received veneration from the people in the past. Man offered veneration only to that thing which had been tremendously useful to him. Tulisī plant for example is the abode of Viṣṇu and it cures many diseases. The tree and its branches constitute one of the most prominent devices that was adopted by the mintmasters for portraiture on the early Indian coins including the punch-marked and the cast coins. The tree-in-railing is the most conventional style of representation on coins, which is recognised as one of the important symbols.[130] A parasol is planted in the left corner. A cast coin represents a tree in railing.[131] On the lower right corner, a miniature bull is shown facing it. A cast coin portrays on its obverse two trees in railing side by side.[132] The small Ujjain symbol surmounts on the left. A punch-marked coin.[133] from Kāmrej represents on its obverse a man squatting, and to his left

a tree within railing is noticed. The British Museum catalogue of Allan also has a sufficiently large number of coins, which shows the tree sometimes plain and sometimes with branches within the railing. This punch-marked coin may be roughly dated to Circa 300 B.C.[131] The leafy branch of a tree, either single or double, is added with a flower at the end. Sometimes, we notice a bird on the leafy branch of a tree or on the top of the branch. This can be described simply as an interesting variation of the tree symbols.[135]

D. B. Spooner once suggested that the tree symbol represents the sacred Bodhi tree of the Buddhists, which he later on revised. He opined that the tree actually signifies the Hoama tree recognised in ancient Iranian religious beliefs. Sometimes a tree is noticed on the top of a *stūpa*[136] J. N. Banerjea interprets the tree symbol as the Caityavṛkṣas and Sthalavṛkṣas.[137] A Barth[138] is of the view that the products of the vegetable kingdom have always been the object of worship, the presence of which may be traced through Indian antiquity as far as the most ancient myths and the most ancient usages are concerned. Yama drinks with the gods and ancestors only under a tree with beautiful foliage.[139] Later texts refer to the adoration paid to large trees passed in marriage processions.[140] We have an allusion to the fig tree.[141] It is under the fig tree that the gods sit in the third heaven. We have knowledge of the fig tree and the tree of life.[142] The Purāṇas contain references to *Pārijāta*, *Kalpadruma* and other celestial trees. In the Epics Caityavṛkṣas are commonly mentioned. It is said that not even the leaf of a Caitya may be destroyed for the Caityas are the resort of Devas, Yakṣas, Nāgas, Apsarās, Bhūtas, etc.[143] Almost each and every village in India has tree venerated as Caitya, a sacred object. Specially sacred in the *pīpala* or *aṣvatha*, the sanctity of which was recognised in Buddhism. Not only the Buddhists, the Hindus also offer water to *Pīpala* tree on Saturday for acquiring the religious merit or for driving away the effect of evil spirit in life. The dead soul of the Hindus gets rest in the next world only if water is offered to a *Pīpala* tree in their name by his son or anyone else who succeeds him. Thus, the *Pīpala* tree acts as the agent of transmission to the dead soul in the next world and hence the significance. The Vaṭa or Nyagrodha i.e , the banyan forms the basis of much religious symbolism. The sanctity of the tree symbol was recognised in both Buddhism and Jainism. To the Hindus was sacred the Aśoka tree, to which one may pray for children. As it has been said earlier, the *tulasī* plant is associated with Viṣṇu and is, therefore, tended with great care in the courtyards of the houses of many Hindus.

The tree symbols are portrayed on the early Indian indigenous coins not only because of their association with the divine spirit or utility to the society but also because they indicated the flora and also that the leaves and fruits of that particular tree served as the chief item of their food. Some rare oblong coins from Rājgir form an important point of study. On all the coins, the symbols figured on them are enclosed within a raised ornamental border formed by what looks like the leaves of the date palm tree.[144] It may be suggested

that the border is formed of ears of corn but it is more likely that the border consists of date-tree leaves. The date tree is found scattered throughout this part of the country and the leaves are to this day used as ornamental decorations of gateways etc., on the festive occasions. The tree-arch as a decorative motif is as best as old as Mohen-jo-dāro.

The tree-cult seems to have flourished since very early times. The worship of tree-spirit, characterised by animistic conception, was common throughout the historic period. The seals and sealings from Harappā and Mohen-jo-dāro, which belong to the Chalcolithic age, indicate the flourishing of the tree worship. On certain sealings from Harappā[145] sacred trees are variously represented. Among these two at least are found to be springing either from an enclosing wall or railing, such as we just now noticed on the early indigenous coins. These enclosed trees on the Harappan seal may very well be regarded as the distinct prototype of the Caityavṛkṣas and the Sthalavṛkṣas represented on later reliefs of the historic period. However, the seals in question present before us the form of worship in which the tree itself is venerated in the natural form. One of the seals[146] shows the tree at the right hand top corner, being represented by two branches only. Between the two branches appears the deity, a standing nude figure with long hair, triśūla-horns and armlets. In front of the tree is the half-kneeling figure of a suppliant with long hair, armlets and horns, added with a leaf-spray or plume between the horns. Behind this suppliant is a composite animal, part bull and part goat, with human face. In the field below is a line of seven small standing figures, with dresses reaching to the knees and with a long plait of hair falling down the back and a plume on the head. The deity appearing between the branches seems to be the tree-goddess. The composite animal represented on the seal is suggested to be a protecting local divinity of a minor tribe accompanying the suppliant into the presence of the Tree-Goddess. The seven figures in a line at the bottom are taken to be female ministrants of the goddess wearing small branches on their heads. Some other seals depict a goat or the horned animal before the Tree-Goddess. The animal before the Tree-Goddess is interpreted as the sacrifice destined to be offered to the deity.[147] The seals of the Indus valley civilisation depict the tree spirit in sufficiently large numbers which tend to support the theory that the tree worship was essentially a characteristic of the pre-Āryan culture.[148] Although the tree-worship continued in the Aryanised India, it was gradually subordinated to other major cults. It has been rightly suggested by Allchin[149] that a very large part of modern folk religion is extremely ancient and contains traits which originated during the earliest periods of the Neolithic-Chalcolithic settlements.

The continuity of the tree worship in the historic period may be gleaned from the Bhārhut and the Sāñcī sculptures. The worship of the tree finds representation in the bas-reliefs on the gateways of Sāñcī.[150] At Bhārhut, we have a very well preserved and characteristic specimen of bas-relief, where we find a tree springing from a '*vedikā*' or altar in the midst of entire relief on

coping.[151] The tree-worship came to be adopted by all religious sects, Buddhists, Jainas and Hindus. B. Chattopadhyay, therefore, rightly assumes that the pre-Aryan religious beliefs symbolised with the tree with or without railing became interwoven with the religious beliefs of later ages. Representation of the tree symbol on the early indigenous coinage, therefore, represents a traditional belief based on animism. The symbols and devices on the early Indian indigenous coins are in fact the survival of the Indus valley civilisation.[152]

Symbols

The punch-marked and the cast coins show a number of symbols and devices besides the animal and the tree symbol. These symbols, e.g. the sun and its numerous variants, the three-arched crescented hill, *Svastika*, taurine, etc., had a definite religious significance.

Solar symbol (Pls. I-IIIb, V-XV)

The commonest among the symbols that makes its appearance on the early indigenous coins is the sun. We know that sun is the source of energy to the mankind and it is in this background that the appearance of sun symbol on the early coins including the punch-marked may be explained. The sun symbol occurs on both the punch-marked[153] and the cast coins. The sun symbol is represented as a wheel or a disc surrounded by an outer circle with rays looking sometimes as a lotus or a *Cakra*, (*Sudarśana*) of the later period. The central unit of the Celestial system by a ball, wheel or rayed device alike represented the idea of unity and of the progressive motion of the solar orb through the heavens.[154] Another variant of the sun is the six-armed symbol, which is described as a circle with a pellet in the centre, surrounded by six-arms, three of which are arrow-heads and the other three are taurine symbols, fish, triskelis in an oval, and dumb-bell symbols. The scholars have not so far given any satisfactory nomenclature to this six-armed symbol. A close study of the British Museum Catalogue will indicate that the sun symbol was represented very frequently and the frequent representation of the sun-symbol with its numberous variants indicates its popularity among the mintmasters. The scholars are not agreed as to the interpretation of the six-armed symbol. Durga Prasad is the noted dissenter, who describes the six-armed symbol as the *Ṣaḍaracakra*. It is a curious fact that in the sanskrit texts of the period of Śankara and even earlier, such as the *Nṛsiṁhtapanīya Upaniṣad* and the *Kālivilāsatantra*, mention has been made of the *mantrabja* symbols (a sort of *Mudrālipi*) which, if depicted in black and white, according to the descriptions given in the text, resembles in form the symbols found on the early silver punch-marked coins of ancient India.[155] But the arguments of Durga Prasad are not tenable in view of the fact that the text *Kālivilāsatantra*, on which he places his reliance, is of the late medieval period. The *tantra* itself is a quite late development and any effort to explain the symbols on the punch-marked coins with the help of a text of much later date will be an injustice to the

subject. The symbols on the punch-marked coins should be explained in the light of the rites and practices of the people, for whole use they were circulated. It could be explained only if we could be able to trace the rites and practices of the people, for whose use they were issued. Of course Tantrism is not alien to India but it represents a phase when Brāhmaṇism was gradually moving towards degeneration. J N. Banerjea, on the other hand, interprets the symbols as Brāhmaṇical in character. This also appears to be an extreme view because Brahmanism was not all-pervading. The *Ṣaḍaracakra* was a variant of the sun symbol. The solar symbol does not necessarily lose its religious significance, as it had been in use since prehistoric time. Taylor[156] is of the view that the sun is not so evidently the god of the food gatherers, that is, wild hunters and fishers, as of the food producers, that is the tiller of the soil.

With the dawn of the farming economy, the importance of the sun as the source of energy, fertility and rain must have been recognised in India. The neolithic pottery from Piklikhal depicting an encircled sun is of much significance.[157] The primitive rock paintings contain a few symbols, which are the conventional representations of the sun. In the paintings of the rock-shelter of Singanpur (Raigarh area), we find the representation of the sun with seven rays. The representations of the sun in full radiance are found in the rock-paintings from Sitakhardi (Chambal valley).[158]

Svastika

Svastika, which also is one of the solar symbols, is portrayed on a sufficiently large number of coins either independently or in association with other symbols.[159] Sometimes the *Svastika* with bars attached to the end of the cross-bars turned to the left is noticed on the coin.[160] This turn to the left is generally considered to be inauspicious.[161]

Svastika, being an indirect representation of the sun, is found as an object of worship in the rock paintings of the Baniaberi Cave (Panchmarhi area). The wheel like designs are to be found on the rock paintings from Kobra Pahar and also on the Indus and post-Indus potteries. The *Svastika* and the wheel may indicate the solar direction. It has been said that the four arms of the *Svastika* represent the movement of the sun in the four directions. As to the rayed disc, it has been said almost universally taken to represent the sun traditionally. A small point around which there is a bigger circle where from rays like lines radiate is often found represented on the potsherds discovered at Mohen-jo-dāro, Harappā, Baluchistan and Lothal. The design of an orb with rays radiating from it has been found depicted on the post-Harappan potteries from Rangpur, Bahal and Prakash as well as on the megalithic potteries from Kunnattur in the Deccan.[162] There is an interesting seal impression on a round tablet from Mohen-jo-dāro, having the depiction of an orb with flames shooting forth from it.[163]

The Crescented orb resembling half-risen morning sun appears on the pottery of Amri, a sherd of Harappā and also on post-Harappā potteries from

Navdātolī, Nevāsā and Lothal. The *Svastika* is a very ancient symbol and can be traced back to the Indus valley period. The punch-marked, the Avanti and other coins show the *Svastika* symbol with the turn to the right. The particular coin, which has just been referred to as bearing *Svastika* symbol with a turn to the left is the only example in the later coins. This turn to the left was in vogue in the prehistoric times as is evident from the majority of Mohen-jo-dāro seals.[164]

Lotus

The lotus is another symbol, which makes its appearance on the early Indian indigenous coins. Triskelis also appears on the early Indian coins including the punch-marked coins as the solar symbol.[165] A full-blown flower appears on the obverse of a silver punch-marked coin.[166] A cast coin from Padmāvatī[167] depicts a lotus showing six petals and bearing on them a tortoise, a *Svastika*, and a taurine. A cast coin depicts an eight petalled lotus in association with a tree in railing on its left.[168] A wheel, around a golden plate, and a lotus flower etc. were commonly used on the occasion of the performance of the Vedic sacrifices to represent Sūrya.[169] One of the earliest figures of the sun-god from Mathura depicts him with a lotus bud in his right hand.[170] The lotus was associated with the sun-god as his attribute. The *Bṛhatsaṁhitā* describes the image of the sun-god in Northern India as follows.[171] The god should be dressed in the fashion of a Northerner (his body from feet upto the breast being covered). He should wear a crown and hold two lotus flowers by their stalks. His face should be adorned with ear-rings, he should wear a long necklace and a *viyanga*....his face should be covered with a *chek* plate. Incidentally the image of North Indian sun-god and the description laid down in the *Bṛhatsaṁhitā* tally. The association of the lotus with Sūrya may be reconciled because the blossoming and fading of the lotus is timed with the rising and setting of the sun.

Viṣṇu and Sūrya do not appear to have had separate entity in the Vedic literature. Rather Viṣṇu was not explicitly mentioned and Sūrya was described as Nārāyaṇa. This name Nārāyaṇa may be interpreted as inclusive of both Sūrya and Viṣṇu. In such an early period of Mohen-jo-dāro and the early Vedic literature, the lotus can have no other signification than its association with the Sun-god. Lotus as an attribute of Lakṣmī was a much later development. Lakṣmī herself was admitted into Viṣṇuism quite late.[172] Hence in the early period of history, the lotus was exclusively an attribute of the sun-god in Northern India. The *Triskelis* is also considered to be the solar symbol. In the *Triskelis* the limbs are shortened till they resemble the cogs in the driving wheel of a tilt hammer.

Taurine (Pls II IV b, VI-XIII, XV)

The Taurine is another symbol, which occurs frequently on the early indigenous coins.[173] It is also described as one of the solar symbols. This symbol is extensively used in different combinations on the punch-marked coins.[174] The British Museum has a sufficiently large number of early Indian

coins including the punch-marked coins which depict taurine ४. The taurines are found round a pellet in the centre, in a square, in a centre, on the top of three-pronged symbol pointed downards over the mountain symbol, beside the flag (*dhvaja*) symbol and along with the dumb bell, fish and other symbols.[175] While the taurine symbols appear in a group, more often than not, on the silver punch-marked coins, they are found to appear singly either on the obverse or on the reverse of the uninscribed cast coins along with other individual symbols.[176] On the coins from Eran, we find the characteristic use of the taurine symbol along with the *Svastika* in a row between two wavy lines represented generally on the obverse.[177] On the coins of the Pancāla king Bhānumitra, we find a taurine symbol by the side of a solar symbol on the reverse. On the obverse of some uninscribed coins of Taxila the taurine symbol appears above *Svastika*, being accompanied by the tree in railing and a mountain surmounted by a crescent.[178]

The association of the taurine with the *Svastika* is significantly revealed some varieties of Taxila coinage of the uninscribed series. Again the appearance of taurine along with the bull only or in some cases with the bull and the mountain symbols in some varieties of Taxila coinage probably hints at the inner significance of the symbol in question. On the obverse of the Ujjayini series of coins, the taurine symbol is associated with the tree-in-railing, *Svastika*, fishes in tank and a kind of solar symbol. It is noteworthy that along with the solar symbol and the tree-in-railing the taurine appears on the obverse of those coins of Ujjayini, where we find representation of a deity holding a pot in one hand and a staff in the other. The appearance of the taurine just above a short straight line vertically represented on some Ujjayini coins may be of significance. Fabri[179] has pointed out the occurrence of the taurine symbol on the Mohen-jo-dāro seals. But the taurine symbol on the Mohen-jo-dāro seals appears to have been used as the script.[180] The taurine symbol is found to be used in some pieces of early Maurya art. A disc in hard fine-grained soft stone discovered at Sankisa[181] portrays decorated circles from outer to inner zone. The inner zone has alternating representations of fan-palms, the nude earth-goddess and taurine symbols. In this connection the obverse of the class III coins of Ujjayini may be recalled, which represents a taurine symbol in front of a human figure.[182] This human figure is most probably a goddess. It has been suggested that the taurine symbol is the combination of the sun and the moon, but to Chattopadhyay, it seems that it was closely associated with the cult of fertility.[183] He draws our attention to the close association of the taurine symbol with the bull and the mountain surmounted by the crescent. The bull is recognised as the emblem of Lord Śiva and the mountain with a crescent on its top may justifiably stand for Girīśa Candra Śekhara, i.e. Śiva.

On the obverse of the coin of an unnamed prince, [184] we have Kharoṣṭī legend 'pakhalavadi devatā' (that is the goddess of Puṣkalāvati) and the figure of the city goddess wearing a mural crown, holding in her right hand a lotus

flower and under her left arm a spear. On the obverse we have the Greek legend "*Tauros*", below Kharoṣṭhī legend "*uṣabhe*" that is *Vṛṣabha* (or bull Nandī). The Indian bull is represented as facing towards right. The association of tauros or bull with the goddess bearing the lotus, which later on came to be recognised as Lakṣmī, may be justifiably established. The taurine symbol on the early Indian coinage may represent the head of the bull with two horns.[185] A seal from Mohen-jo-dāro shows a pair of horns crowning the head of the lord of the beasts.[186] In ancient Sumer and Babylonia horns were commonly used to denote the deity.[187] The taurine has been treated as the pre-Aryan emblem of divinity, which took the form of triśūla or trident later on.[188] Sometimes, the two-horned symbol is represented as being three-horned on some silver punch-marked coins as well as other coins,[189] and this may indicate the gradual transformation of the taurine symbol into the trident symbol. No special significance can be attached to it. It appears to be only a propitious mark.[190] Durga Prasad held the view that this is not a taurine and considers it to be the Brāhmī letter म(M). The taurine is a solid dot with crescent like horns above ४, while the Brāhmī letter M is ४. So the taurine cannot be Brāhmī M. It is also different from the Nandipada ७J. Ajit Ghosh has suggested that the so-called taurine may be an elementary form of the *Triratna*, the most sacred of the Buddhist symbols.[191] Contrary to the contentions placed above, the difference between the Brāhmī M and the taurine is very little. And the theory of the taurine merging later finally into the Nandipada cannot be easily brushed aside. The taurine symbol also may have gradually led to the emergence of the *Triratna* of the Buddhism.

Nandipada

It has been observed that the Nandipada represents a certain development of the taurine symbol. The Nandipada appears on the obverse of the cast coin in association with the tree in railing and taurine.[192] The Nandipada appears on the reverse of a cast coin in association with the two-orbed Ujjain symbol.[193]

The obverse of the above coin is interesting from the point of view of religion, which depicts the humped bull walking to the right, above there is a triangle-headed flag-staff with taurine on either side. Now, the symbols, which are associated with the Nandipada, clearly indicate that the Nandipada is Śivite in character. The bull with a hump has been described as being sacred Śiva. The Śivite affiliation of the bull, the triangle-headed flag-staff, which appears to be a prototype of the trident and the taurine was associated with the triangle-headed flag staff. The Nandipada in this case appears to have some definite Śivite association. This developed form of the Nandipada symbol, along with ornamentation in some cases is to be noticed on the tribal and local coinage of ancient India. In the coinage of the Audumbaras we find the occurrence of the Nandipada along with the humped bull on the obverse there coins are attributed to the tribal chief Mahādeva.[194] The coinage of

Ayodhyā depits the Nandipada along with other symbols including the tree-in-railing, while a bull is invariably represented on the obverse of the coin. Such coins are attributed to King Dhanadeva.[195]

Nandipada along with other symbols including the humped bull is again portrayed on the reverse of an early uninscribed cast coin from Kauśāmbī.[196] The coins of Agni-mitra in Kauśāmbī series show Nandipada on the top of a dome within railing with bull on the obverse.[197] The dome within railing has been justifiably taken as representing a temple. It is of interest to note that the Nandipada occurs on the top of a similar dome like object without railing on the reverse of the coins attributed to the Kuninda Chief Amoghabhūti, the obverse device being a deer with a female figure holding lotus which is likely to be identified with Lakṣmī.[198] Nandipada along with the elephant makes its appearance on the reverse of a coin attributed to the Yaudheya tribe,[199] and the obverse represents a bull. Efforts will be made to explain that the Kunindas had dedicated their state to Lord Śiva, who had become their divine sovereign. It is, therefore, not unnatural that the symbols Śivite in character were portrayed on the coins hailing from that region. Likewise, the Yaudheyas also were the worshippers of Śiva. Again in certain cases, the six-headed god Kārttikeya is found accompanied by the Nandipada above a dome on the reverse.[220]

From the above study, the close association of the Nandipada with the bull is quite apparent, although in some casses it is associated with horse or elephant. Secondly, the depiction of the Nandipada along with the female goddess appears to be of some significance.

As it has been said earlier, the early Indian coinage representing the Nandipada symbol, seems to indicate its Śivite character. The trident or *triśūla* has often been interpreted as further development of this Nadipada symbol. The three-pronged symbol just above a small circle with *bindus* (dots) on either side formed the Nandipada. If the upper part of the whole symbol is detached, it clearly represents the trident of Śiva. However, the worship of Śiva and Mother-Goddess that can be traced from the age of the Indus Valley civilization seems to have been handed down to the later ages and was reflected in the symbols and devices adopted on the coinage from the 4th Century B.C. to the 2nd Century A.D. The symbolic representation of Śiva by Nandipada is established almost beyond doubt. The bull mount of Śiva is invariably present with the symbol.

Mountain symbol (Pls. VII-XII)

We find on both the punch marked and the cast coins the symbol comprising of three arches being topped by the crescent.[201] Long ago it was suggested by Theobald that the symbol in question represented a *Stūpa*, which was described by spooner as the *Caitya*. Of course, Spooner revised his opinion and identified it as the mountain symbol. The commonest symbol is the

mountain usually with three or more peaks—the so called Caitya.[202] Three-arched symbol with a crescent over it can be noticed on the cast coin.[203] The British Museum has a sufficiently large number of both the punch-marked and the cast coins and local and tribal coinage as well on which this device is figured. This symbol is found to have been universally used throughout the length and breadth of the country.[204] The mountain in certain cases on the punch-marked coins is made of six-arches also.[205] The mountain symbol is even now called by some numismatists as the *Caitya*, which is a misnomer. Because the three-arched crescented symbol appears universally on almost all coins hailing from north India. It has been sought to be interpreted as the royal emblem of the Maurya emperors. But by now a consensus has emerged among scholars that the symbol constituted of three arches topped by a crescent is nothing else than mountain (Himālayas), which was the permanent abode of Śiva. Śiva is known by his epithet Girīśa or Kailāśapati. The suggestion that the three-arched symbol with a crescent on its top mountain is endorsed by John Allan also. J.N. Banerjea also said that the three-arched mountain symbol with a crescent above it may typify the aniconic representation of god Śiva (for he is often described as the Triśriṅga Parvata) with the lunar crescent on his crest[206] (Śaśāṅka-Śekhara). Coomaraswamy also has pointed out that the mountain represented by the arches (peaks) is found in Mesopotamia and throughout the ancient world as well as in later Indian and Central Asian and Chinese art.[207]

The mountain symbol is found variously represented on coins. An inverted crescent on the top of the mountain seems to have some significance, which has been denied by Allan on the ground of its indiscriminate use on the coins of the Sātavāhanas and Western Kṣatrapas. Sometimes the mountain symbol is found to be the basis of a small group of symbols. On the top of the mountain has been found a peacock, a dog or jackal or a tree on some punch-marked coin. The association of animals and trees quite justifies the view that the symbol in question is to be identified with the mountain. As stated just now, Śiva in the Hindu mythology was believed to have his abode in Kailāśa, a certain peak of the Himālayas, for which he was alternately called Girīśa. In fact the Himālayas which were the foothills of the mount Meru, the centre of the world, are still held in high esteem for their special sanctity. Because, like the Greek Olympus mountain, the Himālayas formed the permanent abode of the gods and the goddesses of the Hindu pantheon. Not only hills and mountains but even rocks often had religious significance specially if upright and vaguely resembling Śiva-linga. The ammonite (Śālagrāma) was recognised as one of the symbols of Viṣṇu.

Weatever it might be, the mountain was held in high esteem by the people in the past not only because of its cult significance but also because the roots of many trees which grew on the mountains served as the drug of the diseases. The rivers often flowed from the mountain. It was, therefore, of much

utility to the people. Śiva who was vaidyanātha, physician the great, chose the Himālayas as his place of abode in order to tap the natural resources of the mountain to prepare drugs for curing the deadly diseases. Although we have hardly any pre-historic or protohistoric potteries or seals bearing the symbol of mountain, the tribal mythology handed down to us reveals the the sanctity of the mountain. The sanctity of the mountain in primitive religious beliefs indicates a significant attempt on the part of man to memorise his original abode in the caves, the hills and the mountains and these mountains provided them food, cloth and shelters. The preciptious hill and the lofty mountain, which once sheltered them and supplied their earliest tools and weapons, appeared to possess a soul or spirit. B. Chattopadhyay, therefore, rightly suggests that the animistic belief of the primitive tribes formed the basis on which the mountain among other natural objects was imbued with a spirit that was helpful and could cast its benign influence upon the life of man.

Symbol of Cross : (Pls I-IIIb, IX, XII, XIII)

The symbol of cross can be traced on the reverses of uninscribed cast coins although it is also found to have occurred on the obverse in some varieties of those coins. While it is represented on the reverse, it is found to be associated with various other symbols like tree-in railing, mountain surmounted by crescent and taurine, etc. The grouping of the 'cross' with these symbols may have some religious significance. Whether the cross occurs on the obverse or on the severse, the elephant is invariably represented on the obverse with a very few exceptions. The occurrence of the cross, without being associated with any other symbol, on the obverse of some varieties of the uninscribed cast coins deserves mention in this connection.[208] The inscribed coins from Taxila depict the symbol of cross along with the palm-tree, mountain surmounted by crescent and elephant.[209] The cross with mountain surmounted by crescent only is portrayed on the reverse of a class of uninscribed Taxila coinage.[210] The mountain surmounted by the crescent on the obverse and the cross symbol on the reverse may be gleaned from a variety of the same coinage.[211] The occurrence of the cross with the mountain is found on the reverse in some varieties, the elephant being represented on the obverse.[212] Some coins from Tripurī, bearing inscription, which may be assigned to circa 3rd Century B.C., depict the cross symbol along with the mountain symbol.[213]

The cross symbol may be traced on some seals of Mohen-jo-dāro.[214] The evidence of the seal suggests that the symbol was of very early origin and it cannot be held that pre or non-Christian cross symbols are unknown in India.[215] A comparative study of the cross symbol with *Svastika* would indicate that the former gradually developed into the latter form, because the *Svastika* represents a cross with its four hands being attached at the end with short horizontal lines. Like the cross, *Svastika* has been traced on some seals of Mohen-jo-dāro. In connection with the discussion on the solar symbol, it has been pointed out that the *Svastika* represents the movement of the sun in

cyclic order, signifying the change of seasons. The cross may indicate the four-directions in which the Solar Orb was believed in the primitive age to have moved and radiated its light, heat and energy.

If we study the numismatic representation of the symbol of cross, it will be discovered that it is always represented in association with other symbols like mountain surmounted by crescent, taurine and tree in railing, etc. though there are cases where the cross symbol has been portrayed quite independently. The mountain symbol topped by a crescent over it is in all probability the aniconic representation of Śiva. The taurine symbol now almost definitely appears to be the predecessor of the Nandipada, which symbolises Śiva. The depiction of the tree-in-railing indicates the primitive man's belief in animism, which formed the basis of the tree worship. The trees in many prominent villages of India are considered, besides being sacred, shelters of the presiding deities. Chattopadhyay suggests that the numismatic representation of the tree-in-railing is significantly associated with some symbols indicating the presence of a divinity, who is most probably identical with the god of the later ages. It may be presumed that the symbols associated within this groups cannot be dissociated from the special cult. Chattopadhyay further suggests that the cross symbolises the combination of the two principles of male and female deities [216] While the phallic emblem combining both '*linga* and *yoni*'[217] represents the aniconic representation of Śiva and Śakti, the cross seems to have been a symbolic representation of the same. But B. Chattopadhyay's view appears to be purely conjectural, as he has not shown how cross, which has four arms, could symbolically represent Śiva and Śakti. The literary evidences ought to have been adduced to substantiate his view point. Of course, efforts have been made to successfully prove that the cross had some relationship with the mountain topped by crescent, the taurine (the predecessors of Nandipada) and the tree-in-railing; but there is no mention whatsoever in any early Indian text to show or even suggest that the cross represented Śiva and Śakti symbolically. On the other hand, the explanation that the cross preceded the *Svastika* in the world of symbolism and that the *Svastika* was the final emergence of the cross, is substantiated much by the affinity of the shape between the two. It has been rightly suggested that the cross indicates the movement of the sun in the four directions in the cyclic order with change of seasons. How could the cross be symbolic representation of Śiva and Śakti ?

Geometrical Figures : (Pls. II, IIIa, IVb, V, VII-X, XII, XV)

The geometrical figures, which often occur on the obverse of the punch-marked coins, include circle, square, pentagon and hexagon. The single type silver coins discovered in Konkan area bear on their obverse the circle along with bull, taurine, triskelis and crescent.[218] A circle with three dots in it is depicted along with other symbols on the obverse of the punch-marked coins.[219] The dots in the cricle are so arranged that they give the appearance of a man. A circle with a pellet in the centre and encircled by dots may be traced on the

reverse of the same variety of coins. On the reverse of some coins[220] occur a chain-like object with two small circles attached with each other horizontally placed. In some cases, a circle accommodates the figure of a fish.[221] One of the most common symbols occurring on the silver punch-marked coins[222] is a symbol consisting of three circles lying on a straight line. While in one form the circles touch each other, in the other they are found to be at a little distance from each other. A somewhat similar symbol comprising of two circles at a little distance from each other is found on the obverse of the coins of Viṣṇudeva.[223] In this case, the straight line connecting the two circles is found to have an arrow-head at its top. It is worthy of note that the circle in different forms figures on the seals of Mohen-jo-dāro.[224] The portrayal of the three-circles touching each other with two straight lines on either side on some seals of Mohen-jo-dāro is of much interest.[225]

On some silver punch-marked coins, there are various arrangements of the squares and triangles. On the obverse of Class II, Group IX of the punch-marked coins,[226] we find along with other symbols a square with a cross within it touching the four hands. Again on the reverse of Group X of Class II of the punch-marked coins we notice a square with four dots within it. On the obverse of Group VI, of class 6 occur double-squares, one with four dots and the other with five dots within it.[227] They are associated with three other symbols. The triangles are so arranged that they produce the pentagon and the pentagon occurs on a variety of punch-marked coins.[228] The seals of Mohen-jo-dāro help in tracing the antiquity of the square symbol in various forms.[229] When the two triangles meet each other at the apex, a symbol of double-bell is formed. This symbol can be traced on a seal of Mohen-jo-dāro.[230]

At the present state of our knowledge, it is increasingly difficult to ascertain the exact religious significance of the geometrical symbols appearing on the early indigenous coinage. They have been subjected to various interpretations. Durga Prasad held the view that the different geometrical symbols represent different *mudrās* mentioned in the '*tantrik*' texts like the *Kālivilāsa-tantra*. Small circle with a dot in the centre resembles a figure or *mudrā* described in the *Kālivilāsatantra*.[231] This has been sought to be interpreted as the *Paramabīja mudrā* and is the soul and diety of *Aṣṭavidyā*. The devotion to this symbol helps to attain victory.

The symbol, which consists of three circles on a straight line was described by Cunningham as a bale of cotton. Theobald disagreed with Cunningham and recognised it as a Caduceus, which is a rod with two Cobras intertwining it. If it is really a rod with two Cobras intertwining it, it may have some association with Śiva apparently.[232] According to Durga Prasad, the symbol consisting of a square divided by a cross in four compartments appears to be a *Catuṣkoṇa*, which has been described in the Kālivilāstantra.[233] It is described as the form of a square for meditation. "The square symbol

with four dots represents the Assyrian fourfold conception of a deity and the Hindu three-fold doctrine of divinity. A group of five dots, one in the middle and four around it, arranged in a square form is described in the *Kālivilāsa-tantra*[234] as the figure of '*Pañcaśūnya*' called the *Grāmanībīja-mudrā* representing the eleven Indriyas, the five elements and the three *guṇas*.[235] Further, the pentagon is interpreted by Durga Prasad as the *Pañcakoṇa-mudrā*, which kills all the sins. This symbol was probably sought to be used as an auspicious sign, which ensured protection against all sins. On the coins of the Golakpur hoard, the presence of the hexagon formed by two equilateral triangles, has been noticed so placed one over the other that their apexes are opposite to each other. This is known as *Saṭkoṇa-mudrā*, which also finds mention in the *Kālivilāsatantra*.[236] It has been said earlier that the interpretation of the symbols appearing on the early indigenous coins as being '*tāntrik*' in character has been rejected because *tāntrism* is the development of a much later date. Besides, the symbols were not exclusively *tantrik* in character. The '*tantrik*' text entitled the *Kālivilāsatantra* is a text of the mediaeval period. But it has to be conceded that the symbols had some religious significance. The cult of fertility had dominated the position in the primitive religious beliefs. But the auspicious character of the symbol was firmly rooted in the belief of the people since very early times. In a society where the religious belief was dominated by the cult of fertility, it was but natural that the people concentrated upon the adoration of the creative energy based on their common experiences of the natural phenomena. To Chattopadhyay it appears that a belief in magic may have been inspiration behind the formation of such symbols out of the geometrical figures. The *tāntrik* literature reveals the impact of magic upon the people. It may be said that in the early period there was a common treasure of symbols from which every cult drew its own symbols. The symbols on the early indigenous coins had no specific cult significance.

The punch-marked coins depict on their sides the symbols of edifices, which comprise of two *stūpa* like objects at a little distance from each other with two flags by their sides and a pole standing between the flags. The whole composition is shown on the base of a straight line. This symbol is associated with three human figures on the right and an animal (unidentifiable) on the left. The human figures as well as the animal figures are found to have turned their heads from the symbol in question.[237]

A similar building composition is found on some varieties of coins along with solar symbols, bull, tree-branch and mountain surmounted by crescent. It is significant to note that the two *stūpa*-like objects with two flags and a pole between them are associated with and gradually replaced by a symbol comprising of two *Stūpa*-like objects with a higher pillar between them standing on the base of a straight line.[238] On the obverse of group X, of class 2 of the silver punch-marked coins appears a symbol, which has been described by Theobald "as a raised grain store with a pole in front.[239]

The equivalents of some edifice symbols are traced on the seals of Mohen-jo-dāro.[240] The seals show symbols, which have been described by Theobald as 'a raised grain store with a pole in front'. The pole in front found in some cases with a spear-head suggests, no doubt, the protection of the granary against the miscreants. The symbol, which is described as the *Stūpa*-like object, has been described by Durga Prasad as the lotus plant growing in water.[241] But if we compare the symbols with two arches put side by side at a little distance from each other, it is natural for us to assume that it gradually led to the development of the mountain symbol with arches standing one upon the other. As already seen the three-arched mountain symbol has been confused by some scholars as the *Caitya* symbol, it may, however, be suggested that there is some scope of considering the arches standing side by side as the representation of the *Stūpas*. Because these symbols are found to be associated with three human figures, it is not unreasonable to assume that the human figures represent the worshippers of the *Stūpa*. It was customary in ancient times to erect *dhvaja stambhas* or columns bearing the emblems of the gods in front of such sanctuaries associated particularly with the worship of Viṣṇu.[242] But what is sometimes described as *stūpa* or Chaitya should imvairably be taken a representation of a hill. Whatever that might be, it is to be admitted that "the desire for a permanent habitation was more keenly felt in religious than in secular architecture". However, the assumption that on the silver punch-marked coins, we have the earliest representation of Deva temples is to be given consideration, in view of the presence of the flag staff with them.

On the obverse of the Taxila coinage,[243] we have such a flag staff surmounted by a *makara*, which probably indicates the presence of Pradyumna to whom it was dedicated.[244] The domes have been interpreted as representing the Buddhist or the Jaina *Stūpas* also.[245] It has been further conjectured that the dome-like objects in question, in spite of their association with the flag-staff, in some cases, do not actually represent the edifices but suggest the presence of Śiva-liṅgas on a pedestal.[246]

There are some symbols of uncertain character, which appear on the early Indian coins including the punch-marked coins. These symbols have not been interpreted and identified to the satisfaction of the numismatists. A symbol consisting of three spear-heads on an oval, which stands on two legs is very important. Generally it appears on the obverse of the coins.[247] It may either be recognised as a shield with three spears behind it or it may be considered as an acquatic plant growing in a small tank.[248] This symbol rigntly seems to Chattopadhyay[249] to be a shield with three spears, signifying a combination, which might have been an object of worship on some special occasions.

Another symbol is a peculiar combination of four crescents, placed round a dot with their cusps facing outward. This particular symbol occurs

on the obverse as one of the five symbols[250] and also on the reverse of the silver punch-marked coins either singly[251] or in association with a solar symbol[252] on a mountain surmounted by crescent.[253] This is a complex symbol and it is very difficult to explain its exact significance.

Another symbol, which deserves mention comprises of four adjacent circles with pellets in the centre occurring on the obverse of the punch-marked coins, usually as a countermark.[254] It is difficult to explain the symbol but it may be mentioned that a circle with a pellet in the centre is the symbol which is found to be used in the rituals of the tribal people like the Santhalas. That these circles are not without religious significance is probably indicated by an outer circle round the symbol in question.

The inverted lotus within a square is a prominent symbol occurring on the punch-marked coins.[255] The sacred character of the flower is evident from the mode of its representation. Likewise, there are a few symbols of uncertain character.

The Ujjain symbol, which is portrayed extensively on early Indian coins, consists of a cross with four small balls attached to the ends of the four hands. It makes its first appearance on the reverse of the earliest uninscribed cast coins. The tribal and local coinages do bear this symbol in full details. This symbol is so-called probably because it is found on the coins hailing from Ujjayini. But it is definitely a misnomer because it has been found depicted extensively on coins hailing from the entire Malva region and the Sātavāhana Coins. It is, however, not possible to give a correct name to the symbol. Prof. Ajaya Mitra Shastri asserts enphatically that it seems to represent *vajra* or thunderbolt. Recently he noticed a brass *vajra* of exactly the same shape with an autiquity *Collector* at Indore. Not only this, it has been found on the potteries from Nal and some Mesopotamian sites. At the end of the four hands of the cross are to be found single circle, double circle, single circle accommodating taurine symbol and single circle accommodating small sized symbols. These various symbols are found to be only reverse devices of the Ujjayini coinage with the exception of a class of coins on the reverse of which are found frog device and Svastika combined with taurines.[256]

If the efforts are made to ascertain the exact significance of the symbol by its closer association with some other symbols, some tangible results may be obtained. On the obverse of a coin of Ujjayini, we find the Ujjain symbol and *Svastika* above and *Liṅgam* with different trees in railing. The reverse device is obviously the Ujjain symbol.[257] On the obverse of another coin of Ujjayini, we find a *Svastika*, the Ujjain symbol and taurine vertically in a line by the side of a human figure on whose right side stands a tree-in-railing.[258] On the obverse of another coin, the Ujjain symbol and the *Svastika* are found with the bull symbol and the tree-in-railing along with the representation of a deity standing facing, holding staff and pouch.[259]

Again the Ujjayini association with the female deity (*Lakṣmī*) seated facing on lotus along with a wheel having eight arrow headed spokes and

tree-in-railings is seen on the obverse of a coin.[260] Lastly, on the reverse of a coin we find the association of the Ujjain symbol with the standing deity (Kārttikeya).[261] If we make a study based on the interrelation of the symbols appearing in association with the Ujjain symbol, we find that this symbol had an association with the Śaiva faith. But the possible association of this symbol with Lakṣmī and Kārttikeya disproves the contention of B. Chattopadhyay placed earlier and it may be further conjectured that the Ujjain symbol was an universal symbol, which was used by the worshippers and the followers of all religions and cults. In support of the theory it has been said earlier that it appeared as early as the pre-Harappan period on the potteries from Nal in Baluchistan and Mesopotamian cities.[262] Thus, the symbols, on the punch-marked coins definitely had some significance and they were subject to various interpretations.

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124. *JNSI*, XVII, II, p. 37, Pl. V. 20 Obv. ; Smith, *IMC*, Calcutta, I, p. 201, 20. A.E. Here the Lion or tiger faces a bunch of three stems springing from the ground, p. 202, 10 AE, Here also the lion is depicted as moving towards triangular-headed symbol.
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227. *Ibid*, p. 80.
228. *Ibid*, Pl. IX. 9.
229. *JRAS*, 1935, p. 313, Fig. 15.
230 *Ibid*, p. 312, Fig. 14.
231. *Kalivitāsatantra*, Ch. XXVI. 34.
232. *JPASB*, XXX, 1934, Num. Suppl. P. No. 51.
233. *Kalivilāsatantra*, Chapter XXVI, 29. 31.
234. *Ibid*, Chapter XXVI, 32, 33.
235. Quoted from Chattopadhyay, B., *op. cit.*, pp. 65-66.
236. *Kalivilāsatantra*, Chapter XXXIII, 13.
237. Allan, J., *op. cit.*, Pl. IV. 3. 5.
238. *Ibid*, Pls. VI 1 ; X. 3, 5, 9, 13.
239. *JASB*, LIX.
240. *JRAS*, 1935, p. 316, Fig. 27.
241. *JPASB*, XXX, *Num. Supp.* 49.
242. R.C. Majumdar (ed.), *The Age of Imperial Unity*, p. 487.
243. Allan, J., *op. cit.*, Class 3, Var. B, p 229.
244. Banerjea, J.N., *op oit.*, p. 131.
245. Chattopadhyay, B., *op. cit.*, p. 69.
246. *Ibid*, p. 70
247. Allan, J , *op. cit.*, Pls, III. 8 ; XLI. 2 ; V. 12, XLII. 16.
248. *JPASB*, XXX, 1934, P.N 49.
249. Chattopadhyay, B., *op. cit.*, p. 71.
250. Allan, J., *op. cit.*, Pl. VI. 6.
251. *Ibid*, Pl XLI. 20.

252. *Ibid*, Pl. XLII. 7.
253. *Ibid*, Pls. II. 17 ; V. 20.
254. *Ibid*, Pls. VII. 10 ; IX. 21.
255. *Ibid*, Pl. IV. 15.
256. *Ibid*, Class 3, pp. 253-56.
257. *Ibid*. Pl. XXXVI. 15
258. *Ibid*, Pl. XXXVIII. 2.
259. *Ibid*, Pl. XXXVIII. 15.
260. *Ibid*, Pl. XXXVIII. 23.
261. *Ibid*, Pl. XXXVII. 18.
262. *JBORS*, XX.

2

The Deities and Symbols on the Tribal and Local Coins

In ancient time, India witnessed the rise of a large number of tribal states and local kingdoms, the existence of which is well attested by the *Mahābhārata*, the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* of Pāṇini and the *Arthaśāstra* of Kauṭilya. Various attempts have been made to define the 'tribe' but it was not used exactly in the sense we use it today. However, before the iconographic significance of the symbols and deities appearing on the coins under study is taken into account, it would be worthwhile drawing up a list of the tribal and local kingdoms, whose coins are proposed to be studied here. Among the tribes mentioned in the *Mahābhārata* and Pāṇini's *Aṣṭādhyāyī*, the important ones are the Ārjunāyanas, the Yaudheyas, the Kunindas, the Vṛṣṇīs, the Rājanyas, the Audumbaras etc. The local kingdoms included Mathura, Ayodhya, Kauśāmbī, Ujjain, Pancāla, Ahichhatra etc. These tribal states and local kingdoms were the seats of independent authorities, which is testified to by the coins issued by them which have been found spread over larger parts of northern India. It is but natural that the devices on the coins represent in most cases the local religious beliefs and show the current method of representing the objects of their veneration.

The deities and the symbols represented on the obverse and the reverse of these tribal and local coins undoubtedly indicate the most popular way of representing the deities in particular localities. The tribal and the local coins of northern India are, therefore, of much iconographic significance because in the absence of contemporary sculptural evidences, the coins of the tribes and the localities happen to be fortunately the most important representations of a particular deity.

Kārttikeya (Pls. XVIb, XXI-XXIIIa)

Among the ancient tribes mentioned in Paṇini's *Aṣṭādhyāyī*, the Yaudheya tribe, which derives its origin from the Sanskrit 'root-yudh', was a prominent one. As the name signifies, the Yaudheyas were a community of warriors inhabiting the eastern Panjab and holding away over the whole of northern

Rajputana, the eastern Punjab and Saharanpur and Dehradun districts in Uttar Pradesh.[1] They issued coins from the 2nd Century B.C. to the beginning of the 4th Century A.D., when, with the advent of the Guptas, their currency came to an end.[2] The devices appearing on the earliest indigenous coins of India shed a flood of light on the problem of representation of gods and goddesses of the Hindu pantheon either in the form of symbolic or the anthropomorphic form.[3] The symbols appearing on some tribal coins of India have not so far been satisfactorily explained. The explanations that have been given are mostly conjectural. We may instance the different interpretations of the female figures bathed by two elephants on a Kośām coin and some foreign coins. Except on the issues of the Kuṣāṇa rulers Kaniṣka, Huviṣka and Vāsudeva, no attempt has been made to indicate the identity of the figures appearing on them. Our difficulties are enhanced in the case of symbolic and theriomorphic figures.

An obvious line of approach to the problem of identification of symbols would, therefore, be to trace in them the rites, practices and beliefs of the people for whose use these coins were current.[4] Earlier it has been said that among the tribes the Yaudheyas were very important, who were known to Pāṇini as the Āyudhajivins i.e., those who lived by their arms. It appears that the Yaudheyas were a nation-in-arms. It would have been, therefore, quite natural that the most popular object of their veneration would be the god of war. Skanda-Kārttikeya is well known to have been the god of war or the commander-in-chief of the divine army. It is, therefore, no unnatural if the war-like tribe, the Yaudheyas, known as the Āyudhajivins, venerated and worshipped Skanda-Kārttikeya. The coins of the Yaudheyas are found in the eastern Punjab and all over the country between Sutlez and Yamuna.[5] Two large finds have been made at Sonepat between Delhi and Karnal. Skanda-Kārttikeya was known by the name of Viśākha, Brahmaṇyadeva, Kumāra etc. Skanda-Kārttikeya was, doubtless, the most favourite among the deities worshipped by the Yaudheyas. If Pāṇini's description of the Yaudheyas as the Āyudhajivin is correct, then it was definitely the best tribute to Skanda-Kārttikeya, the Yaudheyas could have paid to the god. Though he has not found a place in the stereotyped list of the five principal gods (*pañca-devas*) of the five principal cults viz. Śaiva, Saura, Vaiṣṇava, Śākta and Gaṇapatya, as formulated in later texts (Pañcopāsanā, the worship of the Gaṇeśādī Pañcadevatā), numismatic evidence distinctly proves that his images or emblems were highly venerated by a good many people of ancient India.[6] The war-god Kārttikeya is a deity of absorbing interest. He is known to the Vedas,[7] and even Pāṇini[8] (5th Century B.C.); though he alludes to figured representations, gives no hint of the deities whose images were prepared during his time. The *Dharmasūtra*[8] of Baudhāyana, however, contains early reference to Skanda and his various names e.g. Sañmukha, Jayanta, Viśākha, Subrahmaṇya and Mahāsena, but it is in the epics that the deity appears in full form.[10] The Mahābhāṣya[11] of Patañjali, which attests to the popularity of Kārttikeya, makes

express mention of the images of Śiva, Skanda and Viśākha made for worship. Skanda and Viśākaha are well known to be the name of the one and the same god, but their separate mention by Patañjali is rather interesting. Bhandarkar[12] has aptly remarked, if these two names had denoted but a single deity, Patañjali would have mentioned only one; but as he has used two names, it is clear that Skanda and Viśākha must denote two different gods. In the *Mahābhārata*,[13] Viśākha is stated to have arisen from the right side of Skanda when the latter was struck by Indra's thunderbolt. R.G. Bhandarkar[14] says, "this is indicative of the tendency to make the two as one person and they appear to have been so made in later times."

Certain associates of Skanda serve to help identification. Among the gifts to this generalissimo of the gods were included a cock and a peacock and in sculptural and numismatic representations these were often inserted.[15] The period of the circulation of the coins under our study is quite early and it is not expected that the Yaudheyas would portray the deity Skanda-Kārttikeya in full conceivable form. Even then, the Yaudheyas depicted Skanda-Kārttikeya with as much attributes as could be possible to accommodate on the limited space provided on the coins. Kārttikeya, generally described as the son of Śiva and Pārvatī, seems to have been conceived first as the offspring of Agni. In the *Rāmāyaṇa*.[16] he is stated to be the son of Agni from Gaṅgā. In this connection R.G. Bhandarkar[17] observes, "the foetus was thrown by Gaṅgā on the Himāvat mountain and it was nourished by the six stars constituting the constellation of Kṛttikās and was called the son of Kṛttikā". In the *Mahābhārata*[18] too, he is represented as the son of Agni but born from his wife Śvāhā, who, enamoured of Agni, is said to have assumed the forms of the wives of six Ṛsis whom he loved, and every time after her union with him, repaired to the top of an inaccessible mountain, where she deposited the seed into the golden receptacle, out of which was born a child with six-heads, twelve ears, arms and feet united into a single body and neck. It is, however, worthy of note that the story makes Agni to appear from the orb of the sun[19] thus establishing identity of the one with the other and evidently suggesting Kārttikeya to be a solar deity. It may be noted that Śiva has nothing to do with the birth of the divine child, though when he is brought before the gods to be witnessed by them, he is addressed as Rudraputra, Rudra being epithet of Agni.[20] However, in the same epic[21] Kārttikeya is mentioned elsewhere as the offspring of Śiva and Pārvatī, who are said to have assumed the form of Agni and Śvāhā respectively. The transference of Kārttikeya's parentage from Agni to Śiva is not difficult to visualise, for Rudra, the epithet of Agni is also Śiva's epithet. Various are the stories narrating the birth of Kārttikeya given not only in this epic[22] but also in the Purāṇas[23] (based on which is the elaborate description in Kālidāsa's *Kumārasambhava*) which may convery the impression that necessity of a commander for the army of gods, who suffered at the hands of the demons was the immediate cause of his birth, that his birth was caused by the seed of Śiva, which fell on the ground as a result of intervention of the

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gods during his long lasting union with his spouse Pārvatī, that Śiva cast his seed into Agni (or the seed so fallen was taken up by Agni, who threw it into the womb of Gaṅgā, that Gaṅgā deposited the seed into the receptacle among the Sarvana on the top of the mount Merū, that it was nursed by the six Kṛttikās, (or according to another version the seed was transferred to the six Kṛttikās when they went to bathe in the Gaṅgā) and that ultimately the divine child with six faces was born. Rao has aptly pointed out that most of his epithets have reference to the circumstances of his birth. Thus the different names of the deity Skanda Kārttikeya explain his birth and origin and not the quite different gods.

As Bhattacharya[24] suggests, the very name Kumāra (Kārttikeya) is indicative of youth and spirit. In the *Bṛhatsaṁhitā*,[25] Kārttikeya is described as being youthful in appearance, having a spear in his hand and a peacock as his main object of cognizance. Although the number of his arms is not mentioned, yet a two armed figure is obviously meant. The *Viṣṇudharmottara*[26] however, describes a six faced figure under the name of Kumāra as endowed with six faces, decorated with *Śikhandaka* type of coiffure, dressed in red-garment, riding on a noble peacock, and holding a cock (*Kukkuta*) and a bull in his right hand and a victory flag (*Vaijyantī Patāka*) and a spear (*Śakti*) in his left ones. The number of the hands of the god is evidently four according to this work. The *Samarāṅganasūtradhāra*,[27] however, describes the images of Kārttikeya very copiously and elaborately. According to this work, as well, the deity is to be represented like the morning sun, clothed in red-garment and having a fiery red colour. His form is required to be beautiful, and though youthful, should be tending towards childhood. He is required to have a garland of *muktā-maṇī*. He can have either six-heads or only one head. He is to be shown with his *śakti* (spear) the very embodiment of his prowess. The number of his arms, however, varies according to the places. In a town, he is to be adorned with twelve arms, in the *kheṭaka* with six arms and in a village with two hands only. The earliest effort to portray Lord Kārttikeya on coins was made at Ujjainī, where we find three headed deity (Kārttikeya ?) occurring on class II, variety l.n. of Ujjain coins.[28] The identity of the god with Kārttikeya has, however, been disputed. Cunningham proposed to identify this figure as Śiva-Mahākāla, who had a famous temple at Ujjain and regarded as a single evidence of Brāhmaṇism at Ujjain.[29] The latter part of Cunningham's statement can no longer be regarded as tenable in view of what has been said earlier. John Allan says[30] that the characteristic symbol of class II is a deity, whom he has identified with Kārttikeya since he holds a spear; on variety L he is shown with three heads, the other three are behind and naturally not reprentsed because they cannot be seen so that he is six-headed, which identifies him as Kārttikeya. The possibility that he is Śiva, whose plurality of heads would be indicated in the same way must not be overlooked, the absence of trident or other symbols of Śiva, and the fact that he has only two arms—althongh this need not be stressed—is against this. The importance of the

cult of Śiva Mahākāla at Ujjayinī is well-known, it is of course not impossible that as on the coins of the Yaudheyas, both Kārttikeya and Śiva are represented.[31] Banerjea identifies this figure as three-headed Śiva. It, however, appears more reasonable to identify this deity with Kārttikeya.[32] A study of the figures of Śiva seen on the punch-marked, Pahlava, and Kuṣāṇa coins lends support to this view. The single headed deity appearing on some punch-marked coins may stand for Śiva. On the coins of the Into-Parthian ruler Gondophares, we find only single-headed figure of the god. The first Kuṣāṇa chief to introduce the figure of Śiva is Wema-Kadphises. On his coins as also on the coins of Kaniṣka I, Śiva is usually shown with single head. It is on the coins of Huviṣka that we find Śiva represented both single headed and three-headed. It would thus appear that Śiva was first represented with only one head and that the feature of multiple heads made its appearance at a later phase in the development of Śiva's iconography.[33] Śiva, therefore, could hardly have been represented with multiple heads on the Ujjayini, coins, which are by general consensus assigned to the 3rd-2nd century B.C. We feel, therefore, that the figure was intended to represent the six-faced god Kārttikeya.[34] The difference between Kārttikeya on the Ujjaiyini coins and the Yaudheya coins has been explained by conjecturing that it was an outcome of considerable thought on the part of the artists, who took a period of about three or four centuries in evolving this technique. The process began at Ujjayini, where three front hesads were shown and the three remaining were left to be imagined, it ended with the Yaudheya coins where all the six heads are clearly visible, nothing being left for the imagination. Usually, Kārttikeya is shown either six-headed[35] or single-headed.[36] His consort Devasenā or Kaumārī is, however, missing in the account of Samarāṅgaṇasūtradhāra.[37] Bhattacharya[38] has rightly observed that the number of the hands of Kārttikeya differed accordingly as he is worshipped in different places. The point to be examined here in the present thesis is if the icons of deities represented on the coins are in accordance with the norms laid down in the texts on iconography. Skanda Kārttikeya appears both single-headed and six-headed on the Yaudheya coins with a spear as his emblem par-excellence, Kārttikeya, single headed, standing facing to front, and holding his characteristic weapon spear in his right hand, appears with his mount, the peacock, on the Yaudheya coins.[39] The left hand of the deity rests on the Waist. The god Skanda-Kārttikeya appears. on the obverse of a Yaudheya coinage, six-headed and holds a spear in his right hand.[40] The features which are common to almost all the representation of the god on the Yaudheya coins, are the spear and the peacock. The spear was a gift to the war god of the divine forces and the peacock was his vehicle. Another important feature of Kārttikeya on the Yaudheya coins is his being six-headed. Spear (*Śakti*) is the emblem par-excellence of Kārttikeya which indicates his prowess. Dasgupta[41] rightly observes that the six heads of the god are reminiscient of the Sadānana or Sanmukha of the Hindu war god Kārttikeya, while the long spear is his

Śakti (sometimes bound with a fillet), his characteristic emblem. The identification of this six-headed deity with Kārttikeya is confirmed by the use of his two names Brāhmaṇya and Kumāra, which are found in the accompanying coin-legend.[42] A study of the Yaudheya coins would prove beyond doubt that Skanda Kārttikeya was venerated by this tribe, as contended earlier. And at a certain stage of their history, the Yaudheyas went a step further by dedicating their state to Lord Kārttikeya. Specific mention may be made of the fact that the figures of Kārttikeya on some coins of the devotees of this god is markedly a spirited one and worthy of the representation of a war-god.[43] The portrayal of Skanda-Kārttikeya on the coins of the Yaudheyas, though they existed at a quite early period of history, is complete and standard when we compare the iconic representation of the god on coins with the descriptions laid down in texts on iconography. The attribution of cock as a gift to war-general Kārttikeya proves his solar origin because cock-voice is coupled with the sum rise. Moreover, the colour of the cock is deep-red, indicative of the deep-red colour of the rising sun. That Kārttikeya was portrayed on the coins of the Yaudheyas is clear from all the tests.

The bird that appears on a large number of the Yaudheya coins is in most cases a peacock[44] while on a few specimens the presence of a cock may be doubted. A cock crested standard may be traced on a coin.[45] We find a bird at the left foot of the male figure on a particular Yaudheya coin.[46] This bird at the left foot of the god on the Yaudheya coin appeared to be a peacock to A. C. Banerjea and as peacock is the *vāhana* of Kārttikeya, the mars of the Hindus, Banerjea takes the figure as such.[47] Both cock and peacock are, however, associated with Kārttikeya.[48] In the *Bṛhatsaṁhitā*, cock is described as an important emblem of the war-god Skanda-Kārttikeya. A large cock with a red tuft is mentioned in the Mahābhārata[49] as comprising a gift to the generalissimo of the gods prior to his marriage with Devasenā and a cock is included in the *Viṣṇudharmottara*[50] among the objects to be held by the deity. Kārttikeya's association with cock may be explained by their possible common solar connection as cock is well-known to be the harbinger of the rising sun.[51] It is, therefore, no wonder if the figure of Sūrya is found prominently carved on the broken red sand stone staff of the 2nd century A. D. discovered at Lala Bhagat[52] in the Kanpur district of U.P. which originally seems to have been a Kukkuṭadhvaja of Kārttikeya topped by the figure of a cock also found separately in the vicinity. The solar basis of Kārttikeya may also be detected from the fact that the spear, the important attribute of the god, is said to have been fashioned from a portion of Sūrya's glory.[53] There is the least doubt in accepting the association of cock with Kārttikeya. A close study of the Yaudheya coins will lead us to the conclusion that the coins portray their favourite god in all postures and conceivable manners.

There is probably a solitary coin, on the obverse of which we find Kārttikeya, the war-god, standing on a lotus with a vase in the field on the right side.[54] The legend '*Brahmaṇyadevasya*' is clear on the coin. This may appear

strange at first but it may be satisfactorily explained in the light of the solar origin of Kārttikeya.

Possibly to commemorate definite solar basis of Kārttikeya, the mint-masters may have depicted him as standing on lotus. Hence. Kārttikeya standing on lotus need not appear quite strange to us. Kārttikeya with lotus under his feet may be better explained as a novelty of the Yaudheyas to remind people of Skanda-Kārttikeya's definite solar basis for lotus is already known to be a very important attribute of the Sun-god.

On the reverse of a particular Yaudheya coin, a six-headed goddess is seen.[55] V.S. Agrawala[56] felt inclined to identify this goddess as Ṣaṣṭhī, also known as Devasenā, the consort of Kārttikeya. The six-heads of the goddess were justified by the similar number of heads of her consort seen on the other side of the coins. But then, according to Deenbandhu Pandey,[57] Agrawala had not any textual authority to support his assumption. A. Bhattacharya[58] also supports the contention of Deenbandhu Pandey that the name of the goddess Ṣaṣṭhī cannot be found in any ancient Sanskrit Purāṇa or any other Sanskrit literature. Later, however, as pointed out by Pandey himself, he noticed a reference in literature wherein six-headed Ṣaṣṭhī in mentioned.[59] Goddess Ṣaṣṭhī is always related with the welfare of the children[60] whereas goddess Devasenā is not known in any such context. In the *Śrīmad-Devībhāgavata Purāṇa*, however, Devasenā is called as Ṣaṣṭhī and thus related with the children.[61] She has been considered there as yoginī. This is probably a later development in the worship of Ṣaṣṭhī. It may, however, be noted that the reference of the *Mahābhārata*, where Ṣaṣṭhī is referred to as Devasenā,[62] is of later date. Deenbandhu Pandey[63] suggests that Devasenā and Ṣaṣṭhī were two different goddesses, who were merged into one in course of time.

Ṣaṇmukha (six-headed) Kārttikeya on the other side of the Yaudheya coins[64] has been called as Brahmaṇya and Kumāra. He has been referred to in the *Mahābhārata*[65] as the son of *Kṛttikā*.[66] The whole burden of the paper of Mr. Pandey is that the six-headed goddess on the reverse of some of the Yaudheya coins is no other than the Kṛttikās, the mothers of war-god skanda-Kārttikeya, Kṛttikā is depicted with six-heads. The god on the obverse of the Yaudheya coins is Kārttikeya and the six-headed goddess on the reverse, according to Pandey, is Kṛttikā his mother, a unique example to the numismatic convention in India. Differing from his views, Dasgupta[67] rightly observes that this identification is ingenious and does not carry much conviction, since the another has failed to cite an instance depicting son with mother either on human or divine level in its support. In fact, there is no textual description of one Kṛttikā alone or of any composite form of six-Kṛttikās. Dasgupta further suggests that following Allan, Banerjea described the figure as that of Lakṣmī. Illustrating the aspect of Ṣaṣṭhī as being the protectress of child, Bhattacharya[68] said that the goddess has been named Ṣaṣṭhī because of her presiding over the rites, which are performed on the sixth (Ṣaṣṭhī) day of the

new-born babe for the sake of securing its well-being; the name can have no other significance. It is this epithet *Ṣaṣṭhī* which has subsequently been extended to all the deities, who are beneficent to the children.

A few sculptures depicting a six-headed goddess on the other hand are illustrative of the concept of *Saṁmukhī Ṣaṣṭhī* or Devasenā, who is variantly described as Lakṣmī, Āśā, Sinivālī, etc. in the *Mahābhārata*.[69] Dasgupta[70] is right when he asserts that it is more than certain that the one-headed or six-headed female figure is that of Devasenā or Ṣaṣṭhī, the consort of Kārttikeya. Incidentally, her posture is reminiscent of Mao, Mithra and Helios on the Kuṣāṇa coins. On some specimens, the delineation of the goddess is marked with an admirable clarity of expression.

Another example of the depiction of Skanda-Kārttikeya, though not very clear, is noticed on the reverse of the coins,[71] where we find a man standing to front with a spear (*Śakti*) in the right hand and a snake to right. The obverse side of the coin shows an elephant with uplifted trunk and moving towards the left. Similar device was adopted on still another coin.[72] On coin no. 10 in Pl. V of Cunningham's *coins of Ancient India*, the obverse represents a male figure facing to front with a spear in his right hand and a snake to right. The elephant on the left appears on the reverse of the said coin. Now let us see what this male figure with the spear in his hand actually stands for ? Earlier, it has been indicated that *Śakti* or spear was the emblem par-excellence of Lord Kārttikeya, who was the war-general of the gods in war against the Asuras. It is also known from the literature that warrior was the representative of Lord Kārttikeya on coins and Śakti, the spear, which is the weapon to fight with, is the befitting attribute of the war-god. Therefore, the male figure on the coins of the Audumbaras with a spear is no other than the warrior, who represents Lord Kārttikeya in human form. It is most probable, therefore, that the representation of the male figure with a spear (the usual weapon of Kārttikeya) was intended to represent Kārttikeya himself. But the presence of an elephant within a railing makes the identification doubtful. Elephant, Buddhist railing, and snake are represented with the male figure, which have nothing to do with the war-god. Should we interpret the snake representing Śiva, who is known to be the father of Kārttikeya because snake served the purpose of ornamenting the body of Śiva. We know that snake was favourite to god Śiva, It may be conjectured that Kārttikeya has peacock as his mount, which is the enemy of snake. What actually the mintmasters intended to represent by depicting Kārttikeya and snake on the same side is difficult to decide. But it appears that the snake represents Śiva and the warrior with a spear represents Kārttikeya, one of the most noteworthy examples of cultural synthesis and amalgam.

Śiva (Pls. XVIa b, XVIII, XIX, XXI)

Śiva was another deity, who was favourite to the tribes of ancient India and local kingdoms also. Because Śiva is known for showering blessings on

his devotees very easily, it explains why he was worshipped by a larger number of people. Śiva literally means welfare. Śiva has two aspects, *Saumya* or *Anugraha* (i.e. benign) and Rudra. It has already been noticed that there has been three stages in the development of Hindu iconography : symbolic, theriomorphic and anthropomorphic. Naturally, it was the symbolic representation of god that marked its appearance first in the history. Because people worshipped Śiva in benign aspect to get their desire fulfilled, Śiva in benign aspect may have been portrayed by the people as a mark of deep respect for the deity, who was favourite to them. Lord Śiva, because of being favourite to the ancient Indian tribes and local kingdoms, was portrayed sombolically, theriomorphically and anthropomorphically. The trident of *triśūla* was an emblem of Lord Śiva, which appears independently on the obverse of the Kuninda coins.[73] The trident was subjected to various interpretations and it is one of those symbols, which was used universally in india. It appears in association with the representations of Śiva also on the Yaudheya coins.[74] where we find him with a trident. It may be noted that during the period when Śiva was represented neither anthropomorphically nor theriomorphically, trident was the only symbol which helped in establishing the identity of the god. He was frequently portrayed on the coins of the Ārjunāyanas, the Mālavas, of Ujjayini etc. The trident was the emblem par-excellence of Śiva. The coins of the later period for example, those of Gondophares, Wema-Kadphises, Huviṣka and Vāsudeva have representations of Śiva, where trident or trident with battle-axe combined make their presence clearly.[75] The trident may definitely be regarded as the aniconic representation of Lord Śiva. The symbol is found engraved on the Buddhist railings at Bhārhut, Sāñcī and Amarāvatī, In sculptures, the *triśūla* is in many cases accompanied by the wheel and sometimes we find scenes depicted, where these two symbols are being worshipped by men and women. Regarding its use by the Jainas, the sculpture found at Kankalītīā near Mathura are our main evidence. Describing these and other two Āyāgpaṭṭas, Buhler pointed: "The first circular band is rather narrow and bears representation of four highly ornamented *triśūlas* which, no doubt, with the ancient Jainas, as with the ancient Buddhas, were considered as emblems of three Jewels." In other place, he expressed the opinion that 'the *triśūla* was, no doubt, in ancient India, used by all sects for various purposes and various interpretations'. The *triśūla* or trident was sacred to Śiva, the emblem of his authority.[76] On some copper coins of the 2nd Century A.D., issued by an anonymous ruler, most probably the Kuninda tribe, we find the standing figure of Śiva, holding in his right hand a battle-axe trident, his left hand from which hangs something (tiger-skin ?) resting on hip; his head is adorned with the *Jaṭā* arranged in the *Jaṭābhāra* manner, as we find them arranged on that of Śiva carved on the shaft of the Śiva-liṅga at Gudimallam. The trident also apperas on the coins of the Audumbaras in association with figure of Śiva.[77] That the trident, in the early period of the evolution of iconography, was the symbolic representation of Śiva is beyond doubt.

Bull has been recognised as the *vāhana* of Lord Śiva. This was a rather late development. When the iconography of Lord Śiva had not evolved fully, bull represented Śiva theriomorpically. The bull appears on the Audumbara coinage like the elephant. It appears on the coins of other tribes also like the Yaudheyas, the Ārjunāyanas and the Kunindas etc. Evidences, literary and archaeological, are not lacking to show the wide popularity of this animal among ancient Indian tribes. On account of the occurrence of the trident and the battle-axe, the bull appears to be a theriomorphic representation of god Śiva, with whom it is traditionally associated as his *vāhana* or mount.[78] It appears also on the abacus of the Sārnāth capital. The bull is of humped variety. Boldly conceived and well-executed, the bull on Mahādeva's coins recalls its counterpart appearing on some Indus valley seals and on the Aśokan pillar at Rampurvā. The bull on the coins of the Audumbaras has definite Śaivite character. It was an ancient practice to represent the divinities theriomorphically.[79] Later on, when the deities came to be represented anthropomorphically the animals so far used to symbolise them were transferred as their attributes i.e. their *vāhanas*.[80] The bull, which later on came to be represented as Śiva's *vāhana*, was at first used by itself as a symbol standing for Śiva.

He is represented in this theriomorphic form on the gold coin of a Śaka chief as also on the coins of the Hūṇa chief Mihirakula. On these coins, Śiva is referred to simply as "the bull". Bull as the theriomorphic representation of Śiva or his mount figures not only on the Audumbara coins but also on the coins of other tribes. The bull device is also to be noticed on some of the Ārjunayana coins. In the case of an exactly similar type of the Yaudheya coinage, Smith describes the obverse type as "Bull standing to right, facing, a raling with a curved object (pillar with pendent garment rising from it). Allan remarks about same type.[81] 'The obverse type is a Bull right before sacrificial post (*Yupa*) in railing'. It seems that the suggestion that the object before the bull is a sacrificial post is perfectly supportable and the bull before a *liṅgam* as suggested by Allan is unsupportable.[82] From the *Gṛhya-Sūtras*, we learn that there was prevalent in ancient times a sacrifice known as Śūlagava, where the bull was offered to Śiva-Rudra to appease him. The vapā or omentum was offered to him by reciting the mantras specially connected with Rudra-Śiva. The bull, therefore, appears to be a bull before the sacrificial post. The symbol before the bull is definitely a *Yupa*. If the identification of the object as suggested by J. N. Banerjea is even a little correct, then we have the surest ground of tracing the origin of animal sacrifice to propitiate the favourite deities. The bull was not always associated with Śiva. It had the sacrificial importance also. The bull was offered to propitiate the deities. Here, we find the bull a different aspect. The tribal coins of ancient India may be regarded as representing an advanced stage in Indian coinage.[83]

On the coins of Ujjain also, we come across the representation of Rudra-Śiva in the bull form. On the obverse of variety K of class I, the bull appears in association with the tree-in railing, which may be regarded as a *Sthalavṛkṣa* sacred to Śiva.[84] The same device is to be found on the reverse of variety O of Class II. The figure of a walking bull also occurs on the obverse of varieties E and F of Class I of Kasarwād hoard of Ujjain coins.[85]

The reverse of Dhruva Mitra's coins does not bear any deity. Allan describes the object as an uncertain one. But Cunningham[86] describes the object as a trident on the basement of a Buddhist railing, the emblem of Śiva, also known as Dhruva. It is further noted that Dhruva is the north-polar star but as it is also a name of Śiva, it may be concluded that the trident refers to him,[87] Allan[88], however, is of opinion that the object in question which stands on a platform in a position usually occupied by the deity between two pillars with crossbars at the top is, however, not trident. On no. 53 it looks like a battle-axe but on no. 95 (Pl. XXVII. 6) the shaft is clearly bent. It must be a symbol of Dhruva, the pole-star. "I am not sure about the nature of devices from the plates", observes Banerjea, "but even if it be a battle-axe at all, then that would also connect the symbol with Śiva, one of whose epithets is Dhruva; it being a special emblem of the polar star, however, should not also be discounted." Rudragupta has also on his reverse a trident between two pillars, the emblem of Rudra-Śiva.[89] On another coin of Rudragupta, the reverse device has been described by Allan as railing with three pillars above, with uncertain objects at the top of each.[90] The reverse of coin no. 2 Plate XXVII of Allan discloses the identity of this device. The central object is trident (triśūla) placed inside a railing and the side ones are pillars similar to the two shown on either side of Agni standing over the basement on the coins of Pāñcāla Agnimitra. The association of issuers name Rudragupta is the well known attribute of Rudra-Śiva. On other coins, the object appears to be a star or a kind of double-trident with prongs below as well as above. Hence, we find Śiva being represented on the several local coins.

Śiva was also represented in the form of the *liṅga*. From the Vedic literature, we learn that Śiva was known as *Śiṣṇadeva*, the god of phallus. In the later period, the human representation of Śiva was replaced by the phallus, which is his symbol. On the variety E of Class I,[91] we meet with the representation of the *liṅga* placed on a pedestal between two different trees in the railing.

J. N. Banerjea rightly pointed out that this phenomenon of the Śiva-liṅga being associated with trees can be explained by referring to the modern practice that many of the *liṅgas* worshipped in India have their particular trees. On certain other coins, there seem to figure what may be described as a rather realistic representation of the phallic emblem of Śiva placed on the top of a tree in the railing between its two topmost branches. It has evidently the same symbolic value as the preceding motif. It is interesting to note that sometimes this motif is found associated with the bull. Here we are brought

face to face with a phenomenon, which must be interpreted as a combination of theriomorphic and phallic representations of Śiva and a *Sthalavṛkṣa* sacred to him.

Śiva appears for the first time in the anthropomorphic form on the coins hailing from Ujjayini and its environs.[92] According to the Hindu tradition, Ujjayini has been a stronghold of Brāhmaṇism, specially Śaivism. It is famous for the temple of Mahākāla, one of the twelve *jyotirliṅgas*. Kālidāsa very fervently describes the ritual worship at the Mahākāla temple at Ujjain.[93] But Kālidasa is generally placed in the Gupta age. The numismatic evidence, however, leaves no room for doubt about the popularity of Śiva-worship at a much earlier date i. e. 3rd or 2nd Century B.C. A series of Ujjayini coins, however, bear an anthropomorphic representation of Śiva.[94] The god is single-headed on some coins and three-headed on others.[95] The single-headed god in one of his hands, usually right, holds what looks like a staff (*daṇḍa*) or spear (*śakti*) and in other what is described as an uncertain bag-like object, bag or pouch. The latter object, however, looks like *Kamaṇḍalu* (or pot) in the right hand.[96] This one-headed human figure also occurs on some silver punch-marked coins. Allan identifies the deity as Kārttikeya evidently because he regards the object usually held in the right hand by the divine figure as spear, the emblem par-excellence of Kārttikeya. Cunningham identified this object as a sun-standard but thought that these coins were struck during the prevalence of Buddhism. J. N. Banerjea rightly observes that the single-headed deity should be identified with Śiva, specially because the object held by him viz. *daṇḍa* and *kamaṇḍalu* are particularly associated with Śiva.[97] In this connection special interest attaches to variety h of class II, which shows a bull looking at the deity. This, according to J.N. Banerjea, corroborates the *Matsya Purāṇa* laying down that Śiva's mount *Vṛṣabha* should be shown in the attitude of looking at the god. It may be added in this connection that in this variety we also find the representation of Śiva-Linga on the top of the tree in the railing, thus combining the symbolic theriomorphic and anthropomorphic forms of the god on one and the same specimen. On some of the coins from Ujjayini, we notice a human figure standing with his left hand raised up and the right one resting on the hip. On one such coin, the deity is shown standing beside a trident (*triśūla*), which clearly establishes his identity with Śiva. The tiny human figure standing with his hands stretched in a line appearing on another Ujjayini coins may also stand for Śiva. A. S. Altekar and D.B. Disalkar describe the standing human figure appearing on the obverse of Class I variety of F of the Kasarwāḍ hoard of coins as Kārttikeya holding *Śakti*. But the figure is not quite clear on the illustration given in the accompanying plate.[98] The association of the deity with the bull, however, indicates his identity as Śiva. A cast coin from the same hoard contains a trident and a human figure and as suggested by Altekar and Diskalkar they may have a reference to the deity Mahākāla of Ujjayini and his weapons.

But the coins of Ujjayini are not alone in respect of depicting Śiva. There are coins belonging to the Audumbaras,[99] which depict Śiva standing to front, with the right hand raised to the level of his head and leopard's skin over the left arm, similar to the figures of Herakles crowning himself. The reverse has a fig (*Udumbara*) tree surrounded by a railing. To the left there is Śiva's trident with the battle-axe combined. The obverse type is a bearded male figure with the right hand raised, clearly copied from the type of Herakles crowning himself, such as we get on the hemidrachms of Lysias, for example. The club has disappeared from the left arm, as we noticed earlier on the Ujjayini coins but the lion's skin still hangs there. The figure, however, is labelled 'Viśpamitra', i. e. the sage Viśvāmitra. Viśvāmitra's connection with the Audumbaras is otherwise unknown. We know that Śiva was such a god in the Hindu pantheon, who showered favour upon his devotees and Viśvāmitra also literally means friend of the world. Certainly Viśvāmitra was like the family-chief of the Audumbaras; but this indicates at the same time, the close association of Viśvāmitra with Lord Śiva, whose *pināka* (bow) was a craze for Viśvāmitra, the saint. But in the light of evidences from the *Mahābhārata* and the *Kālikā Purāṇa* which establish some connection between the Fig tree (*udumbara*) and the birth of Viśvāmitra, there can be no room for doubt that the sage and not the god Śiva is intended here.[100] It is obvious that the Audumbaras traced their descent from him. In view of the special importance attached to the *Udumbara* tree in the episode of the birth of Viśvāmitra from whom the Audumbaras traced their descent, it is also quite likely that the figuring on the Audumbara coins is actually meant to represent the fig/tree. Here we do not find the bull Nandī, Śiva's mount, either on the obverse or the reverse of the coin under study. On the reverse, we have *Udumbara* tree surrounded by the Buddhist railing. On the left appears the trident, which is the emblem of Śiva. The trident incidentally is attached with battle-axe. The presence of trident with battle-axe combined on the reverse of the coin with the male deity on the obverse bearing the legend *Viśvāmitra* makes the identification of the deity on the obverse with Śiva beyond any shadow of doubt. It, therefore, stands proved that Śiva was held in veneration by the Audumbaras as well. It also indicates that the Audumbara were Śaivite in their religious belief.

A definite representation of Śiva occurs on a coin of Uddehikas.[101] On the obverse, there is a symbol. On the reverse, there is the legend *Bhāgavata Mahādevasa*. There is also a standing figure holding in the right hand a trident and bettle-axe combined. The symbol occurring on the obverse is peculiar. It may be some form of *liṅga* (phallic emblem) or some other religious symbol. But the figure of a man standing on the reverse and holding a battle-axe trident leads us near the conclusion that the symbol on the obverse is Śaivite in character. The legend '*Bhāgavata Mahādevasa*' is more convincing in favour of the figure being Śiva and the symbol on the

obverse an aniconic representation of the same god. The coin presents a clear picture of Lord Śiva. Mahādeva is the name of Śiva and trident with battle-axe combined is his weapon ; hence the identity. The legend '*Bhāgavata Mahādevasa*' occurs also on a coin attributes by Cunningham to the Audumbaras on which also the battle-axe trident appears. Here again, the identity of the god is almost above controversy. There is much affinity between the coins of the Audumbaras and Uddehikas in representing Śiva. The symbols that are common to the coins of the Audumbaras and the Uddehikas[102] are the humped bull on those of the Uddehikas and bull (humped in some cases) on those of the Audumbaras. The coins of the Kunindas depict a male figure (Śiva) standing facing, holding a trident with battle-axe on shaft in right hand with a flower or star behind over his left shoulder.[103] Another coin depicts on the reverse a deer to the left on right above below.[104] On the obverse of the coin noted above, there is the figure of Śiva clad in a short *dhotī*, holding in his right hand a *triśūla* topped with a *paraśu*, the left hand being placed in the *kaṭihasta* pose from which hangs some object and which in the opinion of Cunningham, is a tiger-skin. The god wears *jaṭābhāra* type of head-dress. He is facing to front and is generally in the standing pose. But on a certain specimen, he appears in a seated position. A flower or star occurs over his left shoulder. The legend reading '*Bhāgavata Chatreśvara Mahātmanah*' refers undoubtedly to Śiva, who has been depicted here in the capacity of the divine sovereign of the Kuninda state. Banerjea has stated that Śiva on some coins seems to be standing under some *Chattra* or umbrella ; but any such thing over the head of the god is not noticed. The delineation of Śiva is largely based on the figure of Viśvāmitra, as represented on the coins of Audumbara king Dhāraghoṣa, and the weapon held here by the god has also been derived from the reverse of the same or other Audumbara coins. But unfortunately, we do not find the bull (*Nandī*) represented on the coins for which there is no satisfactory explanation. But if we accept the explanation that the delineation of Śiva is based largely on the figure of Viśvāmitra represented on the Audumbara coins, then Śiva in his Viśvāmitra aspect should not necessarily be represented with the bull. Rather the *Pināka* (bow) is more essential. The idea about the bull being the mount of god Śiva appears to have originated before the first century B.C. or first century A.D This is amply suggested by the coins of Ujjayini and Wima-Kadphises.[105] Here we do not find the representation of Śiva complete with all attributes and aspects probably because the time of circulation was too early for iconography to assume its finality.

Besides the bull being Śaivite, there were a good number of animals including the deer which has Saivite association. On a silver coin of Amoghabhūti, the Kuninda King, a deer appears to the right, a female

figure (? Lakśmī) standing (sometimes on a lotus) facing, holding flower in her uplifted right hand, [symbol] above back of deer, SS above horns of deer, [symbol] below deer.[106] There are also figures of deer independently on the reverse of a copper coin with the cobra symbol, three branched tree with railing, six-arched hill or *stūpa* with tree and→ [symbol] in front, square below the deer and an undulating line below, on the obverse of which Lord Śiva figures.[107] As regards the religious significance of the deer, there is a lot of controversy centring round it, while it has been said in the *Śrī-Sukta* of the *Ṛg-Veda* that the deer is associated with Lakṣmī, on the other hand we learn that the deer is the *vāhana* of the wind-god, Vāyu. We do not find the wind-god seated his mount deer in iconography. But the most convincing argument in favour of deer being Śaivite comes from the Indus seal,[108] where we find the deer with the head turned to the centre of the deity, who has been justifiably identified with Śiva, Paśupatinātha. In Gujarata, there is the Soma-cult. In the Soma-cult, Śiva is represented as Candraśekhara and the deer plays in the lap of the moon. It is, therefore, called *mṛgāṅka*.[109] There is no logic in associating the deer with Vāyu. It is, therefore, probable that the deer portrayed on the Kuninda coins has definite Śaivite association, more particularly when it figures on the reverse of the coin on the obverse of which is the figure of Śiva. It may be admitted that it is not necessary for all symbols appearing on the obverse or reverse of a coin issued by the Kunindas to have some relationship among them because the different symbols or devices may stand for different deities or different aspects of the same deity. It has been rightly pointed out that the art of the early Kuninda coinage, which displays maturity, was most likely a product of some cultural synthesis. This is also indicated by the perfect Indian background and logical distribution of symbols. Again when we look at the symbols we find three-arched crescented mountain, deer and cobra. There is a controversy regarding the identity of the three-arched crescented hill which some scholars identity with the Buddhist *stūpa*. Assuming it to be a Buddhist *stūpa*, what after all has Buddhism to do with the crescent ? The main controversy is whether the symbol represents a mountain or a Buddhist *stūpa*. The three-arched symbol is mountain when it is surmounted by a crescent. We know that the Himālaya mountain was the permanent abode of Lord Śiva and hence Kailāśapati, moon, being an attribute of Śiva is placed over it. So the three-arches with crescent at the top is no other than the mountain itself, which was the permanent abode of Śiva/Kailāśanātha. The evidence at our disposal leads us to conclude that it represents the mountain.[110] On certain punch-marked coins, it is found associated with a dog, a tree and a crescent. In the case of tribal coins, the three-arched crescented symbol is accompanied by the cobra symbol, an object which was favoured by Śiva for his ornamentation. It also occurs on

certain potteries found by H. Hargreaves while excavating the pre-historic mounds at Nāl. A seal of late Minoan style has been found at knossos. On it stands a female deity on a mountain peak, the hill on which she stands being represented by the semi-circular curves.[111] It, therefore, appears that the three-arched crescented symbol, which occurs sometimes independently on the tribal coins and sometimes in association with other symbols, has been found on the pre-historic potteries within border of India and in the historic period, it is found associated with the dog, tree and crescent. On the tribal coins, we find an umbrella upon the three or six arched hill. Śiva is known as Chattreśvara or the holder of an umbrella, which is regarded as an insignia of sovereignty as well as divinity.

On the basis of the above study, we can say that the tribal people of ancient India had made efforts to portray Lord Śiva in every aspect. The tribal coinage indicates that the period, in which the coins circulated, witnessed sincere efforts towards portraying Śiva, who was both preserver and destroyer. The failure on the part of the numismatists to present all the features of Śiva may be attributed to the lack of sufficient space on the coin and because the iconography had not assumed the final shape. In any case, the icon of Śiva in so early a period deserved words of appreciation from students of iconography in so far as they marked a good beginning.

Before we conclude our study of Śaivism, reference must be made to a structure figuring on the reverse of the square copper coins of the Audumbara chief Śivadāsa, Rudradāsa and Dhārāghoṣa.[112] There is a divergence of opinion about the nature of this structure. According to Cunningham, it is a pointed roofed temple of two or three storeys, with pillars,[113] while Allan describes it as a two storied domed and pillared stupa.[114] R.D. Banerji agreed with Cunningham.[115] K.P. Jayaswal took it to stand for the mote hall of the Audumbaras or some other public building.[116] Coomaraswamy described the structure appearing on certain Audumbara coins as a railed (circular ?) pavilion with four or five pillars and domed (thathced ?) roof with projecting eaves.[117] The most plausible interpretation was, however, suggested by S.V. Sohoni who invited attention to a passage of Bhāṣa's *Partmānāṭaka* showing that generally outside temples there were located weapons (*Praharaṇas*) or flags (*Dhvaja*) pointing to the name of the divinity inside the temple and thouget that the structure under consideration is a Śaiva shrine of the type still common in the Kulu and Beas Valley.[118] This suggestion is vouched for not only by the combined trident battle-axe, a distinctive attribute of Śiva, beside the building, but also by the sectarian title Māhādeva[119], i.e. worshipper of Mahādeva applied to the Audumbara chief in the Kharoṣṭhī and Brāhamī legends occurring on these coins. The representation of this temple is of great importance. For while we have some epigraphic records of the 2nd-1st centuries B.C. referring to vaiṣṇava temples, no equally early inscriptional reference to Śiva temples is available so far.[120] The Audumbara coins in question shows that like Vaiśṇava shrines, Śaiva temples with storeyed super-structure and some kind of spire also existed in the 2nd-1st centuries B.C. In these temples must have been installed either images of Śiva in human form or the phallic emblem of the god.[121]

Besides among other symbols, which are allegedly associated with Śiva, special mention may be made of '*SZ*'. This symbol once believed to have formed part of the horns of the animals is to de taken as detached from them. Theobald describes it as two snakes facing one another and thinks that in the representation of this symbol, the cobra is intended, a view which was accepted by John Allan also.[122] Cunningham describes it as a Buddhist symbol. But J. N. Banerjea seems to be convinced that it is a Śrīvatasa mark, characteristic to Lord Viṣṇu, the consort of Lakṣmī. Dasgupta suggests that, in view of the appearance of Lakṣmī both in her anthropomorphic and tehriomorphic representations, the identification with *Śrī Vatsa* to a mark is not improbale, though it is not clear as to why in the present case the alleged Śrīvatsa mark is somewhat different from the common Śrīvatsa.

Lakṣmi : (Pls. XVII-XX)

One of the most popular devices not only of tribal but also of local coins was the representation of Lakṣmī. So far as the tribal coins are concerned, the earliest representation of the goddess is to be met with on the reverse of some copper issues of the Ārjunéyanas, dotable to about the 2nd century B.C. Here she is shown standing between what looks like a sacrificial post[123] and a tree and bears resemblance with the figure of the goddess seen on some other coins.[124]

She also figures on the obverse of the earliest silver and copper specimen of the Kunindas dating from the 1st century B.C. as standing sometimes on lotus, facing and holding flower in uplifted right hand, the left one being akimbo.[125] To her proper right is depicted a deer facing to the right which, as it has been suggested, may be a theriomorphic depiction of goddess Śrī Lakṣmi standing in anthropomorphic form by its side or may stand for Yakṣa Uṣṭrapāda, who was specially venerated in the Kuninda country.[126] The obverse of the round copper coins of the Rājanya Janapada also bears representations of goddess Lakṣmī with the same hand poses as on the Kuninda issues and closely resemble the figure of the goddess occuring on the Mathura coins.[127] Lakṣmī as the Indian goddess of fortune and wealth appears frequently on the coins belonging to 3rd-2nd Centuries B.C. Lakṣmī on the coins of Ujjayini may be classified in two groups namely (1) Gaja-Lakṣmī type[128] and (2) Female deity (Lakṣmī seated)[129] facing, seated on lotus.

On coin nos. 4 & 5 of variety A, Class 4 of Ujjayini coins, we find Lakṣmī seated to front and sprinkled (*abhiṣeka*) by elephants standing on pedestal on either side. At top, there is a Svastika on right and left. The figure of Lakṣmī is on the obverse. It is in the epics that Lakṣmī attains her full iconographic significance, in which her different traits are referred to in different contexts. She is said to have been churned out of the ocean along with Uchhaiśrava horse, wine, nectar, etc.[130] She also figures in the epic as the mother of Kāmadeva[131] and in that capacity she bore on her hand a *makara* as an auspicious symbol. Her description clearly follows her iconographic

representation. She is described as wearing a garland of *dīnāras* (gold coins) on her breast reposing on a lotus of the lotus lake amidst the heights of the Himālayas, anointed by water by the strong thick trunks of the elephants of the quarters. Śrī-Lakṣmī has been described in the *Abhilāsitārthacintāmaṇī*[132] as white complexioned, seated on lotus, holding Śrīphala in her right hand and lotus in the left with two elephants anointing her. According to Nayasaṁgraha,[133] she would have lotus in her hand, a lotus garland and elephants bathing her. The *Matsya Purāṇa*[134] also mentions that Gaja-Lakṣmī bathed by two elephants should carry *Śrī phala* and lotus in her hands. She is of golden colour and seated on a lotus. According to the *Viṣṇudharmottara*,[135] when accompanied by Hari, she should have two arms carrying beautiful lotuses in them ; but when represented separately she would have four arms, seated upon a lotus pericarp and holding a lotus with a long stalk in her right hand and a nectar pot in the left, with a conch and a *bilva* fruit. The *Silparatna*[136] also describes her as two or four armed figures accompanying Viṣṇu, should have *bilva* fruit in the right and lotus in the left hand, whereas the four-armed goddess[137] may have the same objects in her hands as recounted in the *Viṣṇudharmottara* or lotus in two of her hands and the remaining ones exhibiting *varada* and *abhaya* poses.[138] It also provides two elephants anointing her and adds that her eight petalled lotus seat should be placed upon a *Siṁhāsana*. The *Aṁśumadbhedāgama*[139] which describes her differently mentions her golden yellow, like that of a maiden, who has just attained her age, very handsome in appearance, with a lotus flower and a *bilva* fruit in her hands, There are also texts, which-also refer to her not only two or four armed but rarely many armed,[140] the two armed variety being more common.[141] Let us examine if the Gaja-Lakṣmī type of images follows exactly the norms of iconography laid down in the texts. Before we begin to examine and compare the iconographic features of Gaja-Lakṣmī, we should not lose sight of the fact that the period of the coins is early on the basis of palaeography, the coins of Ujjayini have been ascribed to the first half of the 2nd century B.C.[142] In the coins of Ujjayini, where Lakṣmī in her Gaja-Lakṣmi form is represented, we do not find her seated on lotus, nor even holding lotus flower in her hand. But it may be said that lotus as the seat of Lakṣmī or as her attribute came to be associated much later. We are aware that the final and definite iconographic shape of a deity is the result of an evolutionary process, which continued for centuries. What lacks in the Gaja-Lakṣmī form on coins hailing from Ujjayini is the lotus in her hand. This may be due to the space being not sufficient to accommodate all the symbols. It may also have been possible that the iconography of Lakṣmī was then in the making. The presence of two elephants bathing Lakṣmī by sprinkling water from two sides is a definite indication of the deity being Gaja-Lakṣmī. Regarding the absence of lotus, it can be said that the lotus flower has attracted attention of the Indian artists of all ages and has been used by the Brāhmaṇical as well as non-Brāhmaṇical sects for their own purposes and in different meanings. As it has been indicated earlier that the mint-master in the 3rd-2nd centuries B.C. (i.e. during the period of circulation

of the Ujjayini coins) could not have conceived the idea of Lakṣmī with lotus as her attribute. It is because Lakṣmī, being the consort of Viṣṇu is affiliated to Viṣṇuism much later. A study of the evolution of iconography reveals that lotus was not associated with him before the Gupta period. It was for the first time in the Gupta age that Viṣṇu came to be represented with lotus flower in one of his hands.[143] It may be suggested that because Lakṣmī and Viṣṇu are spouses and belong to the same cult, the idea of lotus being associated with Gaja-Lakṣmī could not have been conveived in iconography at such an early period. The lotus is absent from the coins of Ujjayini in her Gaja-Lakṣmī form because Gaja i.e. elephant is of significance there. The elephant sprinkling waters from either side with upraised trunk was most probably intended to demonstrate her royal and material aspect and wealth she can shower on anyone. The latter conjecture appears to be more acceptable. Gaja-Lakṣmī appears also on the local coins from Ayodhyā. On the reverse of the coins,[144] Lakṣmī is seated facing ; the elephants on either side sprinkling her ; the whole enclosed in an oval space. The image of Gaja-Lakṣmī follows strictly her counterpart on the coins hailing from Ujjayini. The idea of Lakṣmī being anointed by elephants on either side was so popular that it was portrayed on both the obverse and the reverse of the coins with an intention to indicate her material aspect.[145] But Lakṣmī seated on a lotus pedestal with two elephants anointing her on both sides appears on an image from Khitching, which is of reliably late date.[146] It belongs to the mediaeval period. Because the sculpture referred to above is reliably of a later date, it can be taken far granted as an ideal example of the representation of Gaja-Lakṣmī.

It will be seen that the goddess Lakṣmī figures on the coins in association with the devices representing diverse religious pantheons. This clearly indicates that as symbolising prosperity and royal fortune, she was popularly worshipped by the people at large irrespective of the religious order to which they may have been affiliated. This indicates the non-sectarian character of Lakṣmī.

Elephant is not simply depicted as besprinking the goddess Lakṣmī but it is portrayed in other aspects too. Elephant occurs frequently on both the sides of the coins issued by the Audumbara kings. Contrary to what Dasgupta[147] says, the elephant is noticed by Cunningham not only on one coin but on a good number of coins.[148] The elephant also occurs on the coins in the British Museum.[149] The elephant occurs in various postures, sometimes only its forepart makes its appearance. In the present state of our knowledge, it is difficult, if not impossible, to ascertain the exact iconographic significance of the animal because it sometimes carries a man on the back and sometimes it is noticed moving towards the trident battle-axe of Lord Śiva.[150]

Goddess Lakṣmī, without the attending elephants, either seated on a full blossomed lotus or standing with a lotus flower in her hand very often appears on the coins of Ujjayini, on those of the kings like Brahmamitra, Dṛdhamitra, Sūryamitra, Viṣṇumitra, Puruṣadatta and Uttamadatta, on the coins of the

Satraps of Mathura like Śivadatta, Rajuvala, Sodāsa on the coins of the Rājanya Janapada and on the coins of Bhadraghoṣa of Pāñcāla.[151] The point to be examined is whether the figures of Śrī Lakṣmī depicted on the coins follows strictly the norms laid in the texts on Hindu iconography. Śrī-Laksmī is one of the two goddesses (the other being Sarasvatī), who came to be respected by the Indians of all religions creeds. They are still held in high esteem by a large section of the people of India and special homage is paid to them on different lunar days and *parvas* (days of religious cereninies). Śrī-Lakṣmī is worshipped more often in the year than the latter, whose clay images are worshipped in Bengal with great pomp and ceremony on Śrī-Pancamī day falling usually in the bright fortnight of January-February every year. The principal idea underlying the conception of goddess Śrī-Lakṣmī is that of a good fortune and luck, which brings in blissful prosperity and abundance.

A careful analysis of the literary and archaeological date connected with her origin and evolution leaves little doubt about the fact that folk elements played great part in shaping her ideology and form, the concrete concept about her being only traceable from the late Vedic period onwards. Iconographic texts containing the description of the goddess Śrī-Lakṣmī, as collected by T.A. Gopinath Rao, refer to her two, four or rarely many armed varieties.[152] But the two-armed variety is more common and the attributes placed in her hands are two or four of the following : a lotus flower, a wood apple (*Śrīphala*), Conchshell, a pot of nectar (Amṛtaghaṭa), and a club (Kaumodakī the name of the club peculiar to Viṣṇu).[153] Nearly all the texts expatiating on the iconography of Śrī-Lakṣmī describe her as well-dressed, decked with various ornaments, having such physical traits as fully-developed breasts, a narrow waist and heavy buttocks. These features are indicative of radiant motherhood, wherein lies the real beauty of a female body[154] and a comparatively late text names such a type as *Nyagrodhoparimaṇḍala*.[155] The Bhārhut artists depicted one standing female figure of the *Nyagrodhaparimaṇḍala* type carved on one of the uprights as Sirimā-devatā.[156] This sculptural representation of Lakṣmī in the *Nyagrodhaparimaṇḍala* type is of Śuṅga period and, hence, an early date. Lakṣmī seated facing on lotus in her Śrī form appears on the coins hailing from Ujjayini.[157] A deity (? Laksmi) facing, holding (lotus ?) in right hand, closely resembles the Mathura deity on a coin of Rajanya tribe.[158] On the reverse of Bhadraghoṣa's coins is a female deity standing on lotus[159] whom we may justifiably identify as Bhadrā in allusion to the name of Bhadraghoṣa; but with which of the goddesses, who bear this epithet, it is difficult to suggest. The type, however, suggests Lakṣmī. But she may also represent the goddess Durgā, who is also associated in one of her aspects with Kṛṣṇa and Baladeva as Ekānamśā or Subhadrā. In the Skanda-Purāṇa, Kṛṣṇa is made to say, 'in the white fortnight of the month of Āṣāḍha, in the second day after placing Bhadrā with Rām and myself on the chariot'.

Thus the lotus in hand alone would not always justify in identifying the figure as Lakṣmī unless some other distinctive marks are present. The lotus is

common pedestal for many deities. Their association with particular animals, however, will help us to differentiate between these two classes of goddesses.[160] The presence of lotus may indicate the Śrī aspect of Lakṣmī, the goddess of fortune. But Allan himself in his Catalogue admits the deity Lakṣmī being of doubtful character. But the definite iconographic representation of Śri-Lakṣmī makes its appearance on another coin of the Rājanya tribe bearing the inscription in the Kharoṣṭhī script,[161] where we find Lakṣmī standing, facing, holding lotus in her right hand as on the coins of Mathura.

On the coins of Brahmamitra,[162] a local king, we find Lakṣmī standing facing, holding lotus in her left hand with an auspicious symbol including the so-called Ujjayini symbol while there are three elephants with riders; the central one facing to the front and others to right and left respectively. But on the coins of Dṛdhamitra,[163] Lakṣmī holds the lotus in her uplifted right hand. Hence, the female figure seated on the lotus throne and holding the lotus flower in her either hand should be justifiably identified as Lakṣmī because lotus rises from water, which is life-giving to human being. Water irrigates land. Lotus, therefore, appears as a symbol of fertility and plenty and so is the goddess of fortune and luck, Śrī or Lakṣmī, who showers the plenty of wealth upon her devotees. *Makara* is sacred to her. The figures on the coins noted above are admittedly one of Śrī-Lakṣmī. N. C. Ghosh[164] disputes the identification of Lakṣmī on some Ujjayini coins by John Allan. Illustrating his point, he says that in all likelihood these coins[165] portray the figure of Lord Śiva in sitting postures. It is a fact that the figure on the aforesaid coins is seated on a lotus flower, a conventional and familiar seat of the goddess of wealth, Lakṣmī. Possibly the association of lotus with this human figure lad John Allan to identify the figure with Lakṣmī. But lotus is not an indisputable insignia of Lakṣmī[166] The lotus pedestals are the commonest pedestals on which images other than those of Lakṣmī have been placed in the Gupta and the post-Gupta periods.[167] In all the 11th Century dated sculptures from Orissa, Śiva and Pārvatī have been shown seated on the lotus. The South Indian Śiva Vīṇādhara of the 14th Century A D , Śiva-Naṭarāja of the 12th-13th Century A.D. Śiva-Candraśekhara, Śiva-Lokeśvara, Bhikṣāṭanamūrti (Tanjore) and Tripurantaka-murti (Tanjore) are all on lotus pedestals. Not only Śiva and Durgā but Gaṇeśa and Kārttikeya of their family are also found on the same type of pedestals. Other deities like Sūrya. Viṣṇu, Sadāśiva, Bhairava and Lakuliśa have also been found on the lotus pedestals. The lotus and even lotus in hand are not enough to identify a figure as Lakṣmī.

Śiva on lotus pedestal on these coins may show a very early pedestal. To substantiate his identification, N. C. Ghosh cites the example of iconography, which are of quite early date. Except on one coin no. 25, the deity is well-dressed and has a definite feminine look, which becomes clear from the developed breasts she has. There is hardly any male trait on the face of the deity. Moreover, the figure on the coins[168] is so much blurred that it is difficult to make out whether the figure is of a male one. Next, the trace of a

daṇḍa or staff, on which N. C. Ghosh relies to identify the figure with Śiva, is very faint. What is of importance is that the *daṇḍa* is an attribute of Lakuliśa Śiva; but in that case Śiva Lakuliśa is multi-handed. The hair of Śiva in *Jaṭābhāra* manner is not clearly visible and, therefore, not acceptable. Though Ujjain had been a stronghold of Śaivism in particular, as N. C. Ghosh asserts, it was a stronghold of Brāhmaṇism in general. That other deities of the Brahmanical cults were represented on the Ujjayini coins cannot be ruled out. The identity of the deity on the coins under the study is open to debate.

Indra

From the literary sources, we learn that the elephant (Airāvata) was the Sacred mount of Lord Indra, who is known as Devarāja. But elephant's association with Indra is a late feature of Indian religion. One cannot be sure about the fact that the elephant is the theriomorphic representation of Lord Indra. But the so-called triangle-headed standard can be more definitely taken to be Indra-Yaṣṭhī or Indradhvaja in honour whereof a festival was popularly organised annually.[169] The so-called Ujjain symbol may also possibly stand for thunderbolt (*vajra*), the attribute par-excellence of Indra.[170] The Ujjain symbol has been subjected to much controversy, which will be discussed later at a suitable place. Sometimes, the elephant with upraised trunk is seen moving towards tree in a Buddhist railing. Sometimes we find an elephant with uplifted trunk moving to the left. White elephant is interpreted as rain-giving cloud. So to make out the exact iconographic significance of elephant appearing independently either fully or partially is very difficult in the absence of a contemporary authentic account. We can say nothing beyond it that the elephant was held in high esteem by the ancient Indian tribes as we find even in the modern society. Indra, the rain god, is represented in the anthropomorphic shape on the coins of Indramitra; a local ruler of Pāñcāla, where he is depicted as a deity standing, facing on pedestal, holding an uncertain object in his right hand; a club seems to hang down from the left hand and secondly he is shown in a domed shrine (archway) where other details are absolutely lacking[171] Jayagupta's coins in the same series also shows the god Indra on their reverse. Indra is very crudely represented on the coins as there does not appear any definite attribute of Indra, which may help in establishing the identity of the deity finally. Though we are free to assume that the deity on Indramitra's coin of Pāñcāla series is Indra, there is nothing definite about it.

The coins are unfortunately all small but the deity on the reverse, who may be identified as Viṣṇu, differs from the usual type in having both the arms raised, holding a circular object (? a discus) in his left hand.[172] He is not represented as four-armed, as has been suggested.[173] Allan thinks that deity is really two-armed, his robes hanging down giving an effect which led Cunningham to describe it as above. According to him the four arms would come down from the shoulders and not from the elbows. It is possible that he is represented as grasping on the left a pole surmounted by a discus and another on the right surmounted by a trident. The representations on these coins are

so indifferent that it is impossible to be sure about the iconographic features of the deity figured on them. But the artistic convention of separating the arms from the elbow downwards in India and many early mediaeval specimens are known where this is adopted by the image maker. But identification of the figure on coins is not beyond dispute.

On the reverse of the coins[174] we find a man standing to front with a spear in his right hand, and a snake to his right. The obverse depicts an elephant with uplifted trunk, moving to left. Similar device was adopted on another coin.[175] On coin no. 10,[176] the obverse represents a male figure to front with a spear in the right hand and a snake to right. An elephant facing to left appears on the reverse of the coin under reference here. The association of the elephant with the male figure with a spear in his hand is rather intriguing. Earlier it has been indicated that spear is the weapon par-excellence of Kārttikeya, who was the generalissimo of the gods in war against the Asuras. We also know from literature that the warrior was the personification of Skanda-Kārttikeya and *Śakti* (spear) is the befitting attribute of the war god. Therefore, the male figure on the coins of the Audumbaras with spear appears probably to be no other than the warrior who is the personification of Skanda-Kārttikeya himself. It is most probable, therefore, that the representation of the male figure with the spear was intended to represent Kārttikeya himself. But the presence of an elephant within a railing makes the identification much doubtful. Elephant, Buddhist railing and snake which are represented in association with male figure, have hardly anything to do with the war god. Should we interpret the snake representing as Śiva, who is known to be the father of Kārttikeya because snake served as the ornament of the god. It may also be conjectured that Kārttikeya has peacock as his mount, which is the enemy of snake. What actually the mintmasters intended to represent by depicting Kārttikeya and snake on the same side is difficult to explain. The coins of Agnimitra depict on their reverse a male figure with flaming hairs, standing and facing on platform between two pillars.[177] The flaming hair may indicate that the fire-god is intended to be represented. The name of the issuer of the coin Agnimitra is significant.

Similarly, the coins of Bhūmimitra (pl. xix) also depict on their reverse a male figure with flaming hairs.[178] The deity is standing to front between two pillars in railing. The name of the striker of the coin Bhūmimitra does not appear to have any affinity in sount with the god of fire sought to be represented on the coins. But the flaming hairs indicate that the figure is in all probability one of the fire god. Although the characteristic element of Agni man not be noticed, it may be described as a good beginning towards portraying Agni, who possessed enormous power of destruction.

The coins of Phālgunimitra (pl. xix) depict on their reverse a female deity in standing pose.[179] She is represented as facing on a lotus and holding an uncertain object in right hand. ⩊ symbol occurs on the left and a star

is shown above the head. She is identified as a personification of the nakṣatra Phālguni.[180] It is significant that the name of nakṣatra is borne by the issuer of the coin. J. N. Banerjea observes that if it is a representation of Phālguni at all, its iconography is in no way similar to that of Pūrva Phālguni or Uttara Phālguni as it appears in the *late compilation of Hemādri*.[181] Pūrva Phālguni is described as elephant faced, red-coloured, two armed with parrot in her hands and seated upon a wheel, while uttara Phālguni is tiger faced, riding on a cow, white in colour, her four hands holdings sun, moon, rosary and khaṭvāṅga.

Sūrya (Pl. XIX)

The tribal and the local coins not only reveal the iconographic features of Śiva, Kārttikeya, Lakṣmī and Indra etc. but the depiction of the life giving deity like Sūrya on the local coins demonstrates the popularity of the sun cult in the area of their circulation. An interesting coin has been found from the Avanti region[182] where a human figure is depicted standing, facing, clad in a short-tailed coat and high tiara; above *svastika* and taurine; to right solar symbol composed of a crescent and broad arrow-heads attached to central boss surmounted by rayed sun; on extreme left tree. There are certaln peculiarities in this group of solar symbols on the Avanti coin, which may be noted as follows : firstly, here the solar symbols are found in association with the human figure. This feature is not found on other coins, though solar symbol is depicted on many coins from this place as well as from elsewhere. Secondly, probably nowhere the solar symbol is found attached to a standard, though Garuḍa standards are found on many other coins such as on those of the Guptas. It is to be noted that somewhat similar symbols are found on a few coins from Eran and Ujjayini[183] But on these coins, the staff is surmounted by a taurine symbol and not by a rayed sun, though human figure with a circle surrounded by six symbols and on reverse *svastika* etc. are found. In view of these differences, such coins may not be grouped with one we are discussing though they may indicate that the tradition of depicting human figure with symbols and shaft may have been in that region. A critical analysis of these two peculiarities from a local coin of Avanti may throw interesting light on the history of the sun worship in ancient India.[184] Firstly, the question of the identity of the human figure may be discussed. There were two probabilities as was admitted by V. A. Smith himself. He may be either a king or deity. If the figure is that of a local king, the natural inference will be that the king was a staunch follower of the Sun cult as he is the standard bearer of that deity. There are cases in ancient Indian history when the king showed his strong faith by becoming a standard bearer and also by depicting it on the coins as in the case of the Guptas who called themselves *Paramabhāgavatas* and on their coins, Garuḍadhvaja the emblem of Viṣṇu is found. If this analogy is correct, then naturally the king in question becomes a great devotee of Sūrya and the standard bearer may be named as Sūryadhvaja.[185] If the figure is that of a deity, then no other god except sun may be thought of because of clear

solar association—to right solar symbol compoaed of crescent and broap arrow-heads attached to the central boss surmounted by a rayed sun. If it is so, this becomes one of the earliest known piece of evidence about the anthropomorphic form of sun-god because the coin may be placed approximately between the 2nd century B.C. and the 2nd century A.D., while the earliest human representation is found on the Bodh-Gayā relief.[186] Whatever might be the real fact of these two probabilities, there is no doubt that the entire picture is indicative of the solar worship of probably sectarian type, which might have been prevalent in the region of Avanti in the centuries before and after Christian era.

The literary and the epigraphic references are not lacking to prove that the region of Avanti was a stronghold of sun-cult in later times. It has been specially mentioned by Varāhamihira (the great sun worshipper) that he himself hailed from Avanti. Moreover, the Mandasore stone inscription informs us that a sun temple was constructed in Dasapura. The numismatic evidence, therefore, conforms the literary tradition that the region of Avanti was devoted to the sun worship of sectarian type. The popularity of sun worship in this region may be gauged from the fact that in several other coins from this place solar symbols have been found but the significance of this piece of evidence lies in the fact that, firstly, it probably provides us with the earliest numismatic specimen of solar symbol in association with human figure (if it is not the earliest piece of the anthropomorphic representation of the sun god himself). Secondly, it shows a standard of the sun as a sort of Sūryadhvaja like Garuḍadhvaja of Viṣṇu. Thirdly, it gives us one of the earliest evidences about the sectarian worship. In view of the fact that this symbol is distinctive of this place, it is probable that for the first time, the tradition of sectarian sun-worship in the interior may have been evolved in this region.

The coin of Avanti which has just been discussed is correctly named as the Avanti coins as suggested by Smith.[187] Cunningham describes them as those from Ujjain. But what is worthy of note is the fact that the coins should be better described as the Avanti coins of which Ujjain (Latitude 23°11′ No. and Longitude 75°51′45″ E.) was the most notable city. They came not only from Ujjain but from Eran, Besnagar and other towns of Avanti.[188]

But the representation of Sūrya (sun god) is not a solitary example of his portrayal. We come across the representation of Sūrya on the local coins of Pāñcāla issued by Bhānumitra and Sūryamitra. On the reverse of the coin issued by Bhānumitra,[189] we find a radiate globe representing the sun (Bhānu), the details of which are not visible on any specimen of the museum. Sūryamitra, like Bhānumitra has, the sun as his main reverse type. It is represented by a ball or circle from which rays radiate;[190] below it is the triangle headed symbol with a two pronged symbol below, which is placed on the platform.

The clearest and most significant way of representing the sun god as a rayed disc enshrined as an object of worship is to be found among the devices

of certain tribal coins, which can be dated from B.C. 200 to the end of the first century B.C.[191] The *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*[192] tells us that in pilling the fire altar, a disc of gold was placed on it to represent the sun. In Sūryamitra's coins, the symbol upon which the rayed disc of the god is placed, is very likely the summary representation of the fire altar which is conspicuous by its absence in Bhānumitra's coins. Now, there can be very little doubt that at the time when these coins were being issued, the Vedic sacrificial system had been much mixed up with far-reaching religious changes and thus it happens that the sun symbol appears in the role of an *arca* or an image on these coins.[193]

While discussing the history of the sun worship in ancient India, it will not be out of relevance to discuss the significance of Svastika, which has been universally recognized as the solar symbol. Of the linear symbols, the Svastika is the best known and is even now recognised as an auspicious sign. We find it on the seals discovered from the prehistoric sites of the Indus Valley Civilisation. It is found in many parts of the ancient world, e.g., in Crete, Susa, Troy etc. but not in Babylon and Egypt.[194] It is undoubtedly a solar symbol; and of the various theories that have been propounded to explain its origin, the interpretation of Havell seems to be the most convincing. The Svastika represents the movement of the sun round the earth and the earth owes its fertility to its beneficent powers. Man ultimately derives his happiness and prosperity to the visible daily passage of the sun through the heaven. The arms of the Svastika are sometimes represented curved but the ordinary and later practices was to have straight lines as arms going round from left to right, the opposite form was considered inauspicious.[195] So we find that at Avanti we have an early example of sun worship and the association of human figure with explicit solar symbols including Svastika etc. prove that sun worship in its sectarian form was prevalent in this region throughout the early period of history.

The tribal people and the people of the localities like Ayodhyā, Mathurā, Pāñcāla etc. did not only worship the Brahmanical divinities but nature and natural objects were also the objects of great veneration to the people of ancient times. The symbols i.e. sun, tree in railing, three-arched hill, radiate sun and solar symbols occurring on tribal and local coins are such which reveal that nature in its varied manifestations was worshipped by these people. They were found not only on coins from the Malva area but also from many other regions in the country. They are also found scratched on the potsherds of the period, which are popularly called the graffiti marks. In ancient times man was mainly dependent upon natural phenomenon like the sun, radiating heat and light, the clouds, the hill offering protection and food, the tree giving shade and fruit which were the needs of his day-to-day life, and so he in turn showed them respect by way of offering worship, sacrificing animal to them and also portraying them as symbols on objects like earthen pots, coins, etc. Nature worship was in fact the first step towards the recognition of her power

and supremacy over mortal man and also the first chapter in the religious history of any country. It has had a continuous history in society and still remains a living practice. It is in this background that we have to examine the tree symbol, mountain symbol, meandering line, etc.

Tree within railing or enclosure is another common symbol, which is an example of the worship of nature and vegetation. This symbol occurs on the coins preserved in various museums of India and the British Museum. This practice can be traced back to the Harappā period. The tree occurring on the Audumbara coins has been identified by Cunningham with the udumbara (fig tree). That the tree symbols on ancient Indian coins had some religious significance is attested to by the railing which is always put around and marks it off as an object on a holy ground and tree as an object of special regard.[196] One of the most prominent device adopted in early indigenous coinage including punch-marked coins is formed of trees and branches.[197] There is a representation of tree symbol on both the sides of the coins. In the 'tree in railing type', we find trees with two, three or more branches with leaves. It is also found sometimes that trees are represented without any railing. In that case, a tree is either to be found on the ground or in a vase or *ghaṭa*. The stylised representation of tree branches with leaves sometimes is adopted as the coin device. The leafy branch either single or double, is added with a flower at the end. The occurrence of a bird on the leafy branches of a tree or on the top of a branch only are interesting variations of tree symbols. Spooner first suggested that the tree symbol represents the sacred Bodhi tree of the Buddhists. Later on, he revised his opinion and suggested that the tree symbol actually signifies the Haoma tree recognised in ancient Iranian religious beliefs. Dr. J. N. Banerjea found out in the tree symbols of the coins the representation of *sthalavṛkṣas* and *Caityavṛkṣas*.[198]

A. Barth[199] has stated that the products of vegetable kingdom have always been the object of worship, the presence of which may be traced through Indian antiquity as far as the most ancient myths and most ancient usages are concerned. In the *Ṛg-veda*,[200] it is under a tree with beautiful foliage that Yama drinks with the gods and the ancestors. In the *Atharvaveda*,[201] we find reference to the fig tree under which the gods sit in the third heaven. In the *Chandogya*[202] and the *Kauśitakī*[203] *Upaniṣads*, we have references to the fig tree as well as the tree of life. In the Purāṇas we find references to *Pārijāta*, *Kalpadruma* and other celestial tree. Each village in India has some tree venerated as a sacred object. Specially sacred is the Pīpala or Aśvatha, the sanctity of which was recognised in Buddhism. The Vaṭa or Nyagrodha, i.e. the banyan, forms the basis of much religious symbolism. The sanctity of tree symbol was recognised in both Buddhism and Hinduism. To the Hindus was sacred the Aśoka tree to which one may pray for children. The *Tulsī* plant is associated with Viṣṇu and is, therefore, tended with great care in the countryards of many Hindus.

The tree cult seems to have flourished since very early times. The worship of tree spirit, characterised by the animistic conception, was common

throughout the historic period. Its prevalence even in Chalcolithic age is clear from several seals and sealings. On certain sealings from Harappā,[204] sacred trees are variously represented. The enclosed trees on the Harappan seals can very well be regarded as distant prototypes of Caityavṛkṣa or Sthala vṛkṣa represented on later reliefs of the historic period. Representations of the tree symbols on the early indigenous coinage, therefore, represent a traditional belief based on animism. On a seal is found the depiction of a *liṅga* between two trees with the legend '*Pādapeśvara*' in Gupta Brahmi.[205] The evidence furnished by the seal, no doubt, corroborates the numismatic data. On the reverse of a copper coin of the Ārjunāyana tribe occurs a *liṅga* on one side and a tree in railing on the other, there being a standing figure (identified with Lakṣmī by some) between them.[206] Thus we see tree in various forms being represented on the coins. The depiction of tree on the tribal and local coins in many cases indicate the vegetation flourishing in the particular region. The tree represented on the coins of the Audumbaras are definitely the canting badge because Udumbara tree was their national standard.

There is another symbol, which is called the mountain symbol. Three arched symbol surmounted by a crescent occurs on the early indigenous coinage. It also occurs at the bottom of the Mauryan pillar now lying at Kumrahār near Patna. Long ago, it was suggested by Theobald that the symbol in question represented a *stūpa* which was later on described by Spooner as Caitya. Of course, Spooner later on revised his opinion and identified it as a mountain symbol. The suggestion is also endorsed by the well-known numismatist John Allan. A. K. Coomaraswamy also pointed out that the mountain represented by arches (peaks) is found in Mesopatamia and throughout the ancient world as well as in later Indian and Central Asian and Chinese art.[207]

The mountain symbol is found variously represented on the coins. Although the mountain with three arches was conventionalised in ancient times, the same with six arches was not unknown. An inverted crescent on the top of the mountain seems to have some significance which has been denied by Allan on the ground of its indiscriminate use on the coins of the Sātavahanas and Western Kṣatrapas. Sometimes on the top of the mountain is found a peacock, a dog (? jackal) or a tree. The association of animal and trees quite justifies the view that the symbol in question is to be identified as that of a mountain. J. N. Banerjea has suggested that the symbol of mountain with a crescent above it may typify the aniconic representation of Śiva (he is sometimes called (*Triśṛṅga Parvata*) with a lunar crescent on his crest *Śaśāṅkaśekhara*). In this connection it may be pointed out that Śiva in the Hindu mythology is believed to have his abode on Kailāśa, a certain peak of the Himālayas, for which the god Śiva was alternately called Girīśa. In fact, the Himālayas are still held in Hindu belief in high esteem for its special sanctity and this will explain its depiction frequently on the early Indian indigenous coinage.

We find that the tribal and the local coins of ancient India demonstrate to us the divinities and the symbols connected to various religious creeds being depicted on their sides. Besides the deities and the symbols noted above, there were a few important symbols, which deserve our special mention.

Ujjain Symbol

Though something has been said earlier, and it has been sought to be asserted that the Malava symbol, or the Ujjain symbol as some people call it, is the representation of Vajra (thunderbolt), the weapon par excellence of Indra. The symbol[208] is so called because of its conspicuous appearance on the coins hailing from the Malva region. But it is also found on the coins of the Yaudhayas, the Uddehikas and others.[209] S. K. Chakravarty says[210] that perhaps it is solar symbol and was in extensive use in early times. Formerly this symbol was taken to be exclusively Indian; but it has been met with on certain series discovered by Sir Arthur Evans at Knossos. In the very early times, there was a common treasure house for all the religions to derive their symbols. The discovery of Malava symbol on certain series at Knossos does not finally prove that Malava symbol had its origin in foreign countries. Two other symbols, according to S. K. Chakravarty, of doubtful origin may be mentioned here. One is triangular-headed symbol, which appears on the coins of the Uddehikas, the Yaudhayas and the Almora branch of the Kunindas. It is identified with the handled-cross. But it seems to be the sacrificial post and the projecting lines on two sides were meant for fastening the animals to be offered.

Vase with or without foliage, which occurs on the coins of Malava, is an auspicious symbol. This is still regarded as such by the Hindus, who place vase or pot with foliage (*maṅgala ghaṭa*) on two sides of the main entrances of their houses on ceremonial occasions like marriages. The Jainas also attach sanctity to such a vase. The Jaina *Kalpasūtra* describes a pot alone or a pot with fragrant flowers as an auspicious symbol. On some specimens of the Malva coinage,[211] it is placed within a dotted circle or dotted border. The placing of a dotted border or circle definitely sanctifies the *ghāta* or the pot.

Among the aquatic animals, the fish occupy the most prominent position although the frogs and tortoise are not altogether omitted. The British Museum Catalogue contains a number of the Yaudheya and other tribal coins depicting fish. Even now, the fish is held to be a sacred object.

This symbol may be described as a square intersected crosswise by a horizontal and vertical lines internally. The square is represented by some as representing a *stūpa* and is surmounted by an umbrella.[212] We know of round *stūpas* in historical period; but square ones are unusual. From a passage in the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, we learn that in ancient times square

burial mounds were made by the Āryans or the people who were godly. Now the gods and Asuras, both of them having sprang from Prajāpati, were contending in the four regions (quarters). The gods drove out the Asuras, their rivals and enemies from the regions and being regionless, they were overcome, wherefrom the people, who are godly, make their burial places four cornered, while those who are Asura natured, like the easterners and others, make them round, for they (the gods) drove then out of the regions. Thus we see, observes A.C. Banerjee, a tradition recorded in this Brāhmaṇa that before the system of cremation came in vogue, two kinds of burial were in existence in India, the difference being only ethnic. It is just possible that the round form of Asura burial mound ultimately gave birth to the round *stūpas* found all over India because Buddhism after all is a religion of India.[213]

Likewise, there are various other symbols like, cross, lotus, taurine, etc., which will be described and analysed in different contexts. The lotus for example has never been the exclusive attribute or seat of a deity. Lotus was associated with Viṣṇu, Sūrya and Lakṣmī as well. So, the significance of lotus may be discussed in course of studying the iconography of deities with whom it is associated in any form. The symbols which occur frequently on a number of coinages are discussed in details here. As a result, we find that the devices and symbols on the tribal and the local coins of ancient India are helpful in revealing the different stages in the development and evolution of iconography as has been indicated earlier.

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137. *Ibid*, p. 374.
138. *Ibid*. 374.
139. *Ibid*, p. 373-4.
140. Banerjea, J.N., *op.cit.*, p. 373.
141. *Ibid*, p. 373.
142. Allan, J., *op.cit.*, p. CXLV (Int).
143. Shastri, A.M., *op.cit. Seminar Papers on the Local Coins of Northern India*, p. 81.
144. Allan, J., *op.cit.*, p. 133. Pl. XLIII. 4; Smith, V.A., *IMC.*, I, pp. 153-4.
145. *Ibid*, p. 131, Pl. XVI. 14.
146. Banerjea, J.N., *op cit.*, Pl. XVIII.2.
147. Dasgupta, *op.cit.*, p. 60.
148. Cunningham, *op.cit.*, p. 68, Pl. IV. 5; Pl. IV. 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 15 ; Smith, *IMC*, 1, p. 166.
149. Allan, J., *op.cit.*, p. 125, Pl. XV.13, Pl. XIV-XV.

150. Cunningham, *op.cit.*, p. 68, Pl. IV.5, obv.
151. Allan, J., *op.cit.*, pp. 210-12; 252, 270-1, 279, 80, 83 etc. and Corresponding plates.
152. Banerjea, J.N., *op.cit.*, p. 373.
153. *Ibid*, p. 373.
154. *Ibid*.
155. Haravali as quoted in the *Sabdakalpadruma*.
156. Banerjea, J.N., *op.cit.*, Pl. XVIII. 1.
157. Allan, J., *op.cit.*, p. 252, Pl. XXXVIII. 23-25.
158. *Ibid*, p. 210, Pl. XXIX. 15.
159. *Ibid*, p. 197, Pl. XXVIII. 1.
160. Banerjea, J.N., *op.cit.*, p. 134.
161. Allan, J. *op.cit.*, p. 211, Pl. XXIX. 13.
162. *Ibid*, p. 173, Pl. XXV. 12,
163. *Ibid*, p. 174. 33.
164. *JNSI*, XXIV, Pls. I, II, p. 24.
165. Allan, J. *op.cit.*, Pl. XXXVIII, Nos. 23-25.
166. *JNSI*, XXIV, p. 24.
167. For deities sitting on lotus pedestal cf. Banerjea, *DHI*, Pls. XV. 3, XVII. 1, XXIII. 1, XXIV, XXX. 3, XXXII. 1, 2, 3, XXXV. 3, 4, XXXIX. 1, XL. 3, 4, XLVI. 4, XLVIII. 4 ; Zimmer, *Art of Indian Asia*, Pls. 387, 410, 411, 426, 562B.
168. Allan, J., *op.cit.*, Pl. XXXVIII. Nos. 23-25.
169. Shastri, A.M., *India as Seen in the Bṛhatsamhitā of Varāhamihira*, pp. 119-23.
170. Lallanji Gopal (ed.), *op.cit.*, p. 95.
171. Allan, J., *op.cit.*, p. 203, Pl. XXIX 2.
172. *Ibid*, Int. p. CXIX.
173. Coomaraswamy, A.K , *Eastern Art*, p. 928, Pl. 28.
174. Cunningham, A., *op.cit.*, p. 69.
175. *Ibid*, p. 69, Pl. IV. 9.
176. *Ibid*, Coin no. 10.
177. Allan, J., *BMCAI*, p. 199, Pl. XXVIII. 12.
178. *Ibid*, Pl. XXVIII. 4.
179. *Ibid*, *op.cit.*, p. 194, Pl. XXVII. 11.
180. *Ibid*, p. CXVIII.
181. Banerjea, J.N., *DHI*, p. 137.
182. Shastri, Ajaya Mitra, "Local Coins of Central India" A religious Study. *Seminar Papers on the Local Coins of Northern India*, Editor A.K. Narain p. 55.
183. *Ibid*, p. 134.
184. *Ibid*.
185. *Ibid*, p. 135.
186. *Ibid*.
187. Smith, V.A., *op.cit.*, p. 145.
188. *Ibid*,
189. Allan, J., *op.cit.*, p. 195, Pl. XXVII. 16.
190. *Ibid*, p. 193, Pl. XXVII. 8.
191. Banerjea, J.N., *op.cit.*, pp. 138-39.
192. *S.B.*, VII, 4.1.10.
193. Banerjea, J.N., *op.cit.*, p. 139.
194. *JPASB*, Third Series Vol. II, 1936, p. 58.
195. *Ibid*, p. 59.
196. *Ibid*, p. 58.
197. Chattopadhyay, B., *Coins and Icons*, p. 34.
198. *IHQ*, XVI, p. 499.

199. Barth, A., *The Religions of India*, p. 263.
200. *RV*, X. 135. 1.
201. *AV*, V. 4.3.
202. *Chh. Upaniṣad*, VIII. 5.3.
203. *Kauśitakī Upaniṣad*, 1.3.
204. Marshall, *MIC*, Vol. I, Pl. XII, 16, 20, 21, 25 and 26.
205. Banerjea, J N., *op.cit.*, p. 179.
206. *Ibid*, p. 183.
207. Coomaraswamy, A.K., *HIIA*, p. 44, fn. 4.
208. Allan, J., *op.cit.*, Int. p. CXVIII.
209. *JPASB*, Third Series Vol. II, 1936, NS. p. 63.
210. *Ibid*, p. 63.
211 Smith, V.A., *IMC* 1, p. 171.
212. *JBORS*, XX, 1934, p. 182.
213. In the Punjab a people of different ethnics tock, true to their age old customs and traditions, began to build up square *stūpa* even after embracing Buddhism. In this connection A.C. Banerjee mentions that many of these *stūpas* found in Peshawar district are square. But nothing or very little of their superstructure has survived ravages of man time to afford us any definite clue. At the same time it is also conceivable that all these square bases did not possess round or hemispherical dome above them. That all Buddhist *stūpas* were not round is proved by the remains of a cross-shaped *stūpa* at Sahri Bahlol. From above it will be apparent that this symbol as well as the ruins of stūpa at Sahri Bahlol and other places prove the existence of square *stūpa* in ancient India.

3

Deities and Symbols on the Indo-Greek Coinage

In the early centuries before and after Christ's death, at least the north-western part of India had to receive a large number of foreign deities along with the Yavana, Śaka-Pahlava and Kuṣāṇa invasions.[1] There are a few episodes in the history as remarkable as the story of the Indo-Greeks and even fewer the problems which are so fascinating. The importance of the subject is not always proportionate to the amount of materials which have survived about it. The reconstruction of the history of the Indo-Greeks is primarily based on numismatic evidence.[2]

We know that the Indo-Greeks were the first people, who mounted attack not with the objective of taking away the fabulous wealth of our country but to rule over it. The reign of the Indo-Greeks commenced with the rule of Diodotus, who revolted from the royal Hellenistic family to carve out for himself a separate empire. These Indo-Greeks did not simply rule over India but also issued coins with the objective of promoting trade and commerce. The devices on the reverse side of these coins, and sometimes on the obverse also, constitute a fascinating chapter of the iconographic study of the Hellenistic deities. These Indo-Greek coins, which depict incidentally the Hellenistic deities in various postures with various attributes, supply very valuable though incidental informations concerning the iconographic features and traits of the deities. There is one striking difference between the coins of the Indo-Greeks and the Śakas and the Kuṣāṇas. The coins of Indo-Greeks depict on their reverse and obverse as well the deities belonging to the Greek pantheon. The coins of the Śakas and the Kuṣāṇas depict Indian (both Brāhmaṇical and Buddhist), Persian and Greek deities. The coins of the Indo-Greek rulers present before us the first example of the foreign influence on numismatic science of India. At the same time, they also indicate the trends leading towards the amalgam of the Indian and the Greek deities, because we find that mostly those Greek deities find place on the coins of the Indo-Greek kings, who have certain affinities with the Indian

deities. For example, Herakles has been sought to be identified with the Indian Śiva. It is also said that the Greek deities, who were popular with the Indian population, particularly of the north-west, alone were portrayed on their coins. Although the foreign rulers were inclined towards Indianisation, the introduction of the Perso-Hellenic deities in India is not to be overlooked as one of the important landmarks in the religious life of India.[3] Thus we see that the process of gradual Indianisation of the deities of Greek pantheon had set in. Among the more important Greek deities we have to mention Apollo, Artemis, Athena (Pallas), Demeter, Dionysos, Dioskuroi, Hekate, Helios, Herakles, Nike, Poseidon, Triton, Zeus, who are found represented on a large number of Indo-Greek coinage.[4] We have not sufficient evidences at our disposal to show whether any section of the Indians was devoted to Graeco-Iranian deities mentioned above. But there is little scope for doubt that the process of acculturation which set in with the advent of the foreigners in India was characterised by mutual recognition of the religious beliefs and faiths which gradually brought the foreigners within the fold of Indian culture. Thomas Burgon,[5] who made a detailed study of the Greek and the Roman coins, was of the opinion that from the first striking of money down to the extinction of the Byzantine empire, religion was the sole motive of the coin types. E. Curtins[6] held the view that money was first struck in temples, being the invention of the priests and hence, the religious character of the designs, the emblems of the divinities from whose shrines the coins were first issued. But this view did not find universal support. B.V. Head[7] suggested that the coin types were simply the signet or guarantee of the issuer, a solemn affirmation on the part of the state or any other issuing authority that the coin was of just weight and genuine metal, a calling of the gods to witness against fraud. According to him gods were invoked on the coins as the protector of the states and their heads or emblems were alone deemed worthy of representation on money. The coin types consisted of a device or devices, which might appeal to the eyes of the common people as the sacred emblem of the god, whose name was thus invoked for the good faith of the issuer. This theory was criticised by. W. Ridgeway[8], who attempted to show that many coin types could be explained on the religious theory only by assuming forced and over-subtle allusion. He developed the idea behind the expression "the signet on the guarantee of the issuer". G.F. Hill[9] attempted to show that the device, whatever its character might be, appeared on the coin because it was the badge by which the issuing authority could be recognised. The fact remains that the types on the earliest coins were selected only because they happened to be insignia, a badge of some cities and localities, as shown by G. Macdonald.[10] Chattopadhyay opined that the coin devices were often chosen in ancient times because of the importance, which belonged to them in the economic life of the people.

The opinion of B. Chattopadhyay quoted above holds good to a great extent. The symbols which had some importance in early times from economic point of view were adopted for portraiture on coins. The deities of Greek

pantheon figure on the coins of the Indo-Greek kings, which were meant for circulation in Indian territory. Attempts were made to establish identity of the Greek deities with the Indian deities on the basis of their attributes, characteristics and functions etc. Zeus was the counterpart of Indra, Herakles of Vāsudeva-Kṛṣṇa, Helios of Sūrya etc. But such correspondence may not occur in all cases. Still a comparative study on the basis of the classification of the deities would, no doubt, reveal to us an affinity between the Indian and the Greek religious beliefs and faith.[11] The religious background can be of help in making a reasonable appreciation of the devices found on the Indian coins since the earliest times. The devices found on the obverse and the reverse of the coins represent symbolically different religious beliefs and faiths. The reverse of the gold and silver coins of the Greek kings of Bactria and India generally bears the figure of a Greek deity. There are, of course, a few exceptions. These relate specially to those silver coins of Apollodotus I, Antimachus II, Telephus and Menandar I, which do not depict royal busts on the obverse. On the reverse of these coins we find respectively a bull, a mounted horseman, the sceptred Helios beside a female figure and an owl. Silver coins of Philoxenus (Type I), Hermaeues and Calliope, Menander II (Type 3), and Hippostratus (Type 5) also have on the reverse a mounted horseman, instead of a Greek deity. Types 2 and 3 of Agathocleia and types 3 and 4 of Nicias depict a male figure on the reverse. The staters of Agathocleia and obols of Eucratides I bear on the reverse on owl and palms and piloi respectively.[12] What these animals figuring independently on both the sides of the coins stand for or mean is not understandable. Any way, their precise significance will be dealt with later on in this chapter. Royal portraits are rare on copper coins. On many of them, the obverse bears either the full figure or the bust of a Greek deity, and the reverse, some attributive emblem of or some animal or bird sacred to the same divinity.[13] It is not uncommon, however, that an animal or object quite unconnected with the deity on the obverse occurs on the reverse of the coins while the same coin often bears one deity on the obverse and another deity on the reverse.[14]

Deities that appear on Greek gold and silver coins of Bactria and India are Apollo, Artemis, Athena, Demeter, the Dioskuroi, Hekate, Helios, Herakles Nike, Poseidon and Zeus. Besides those depicted on gold and silver coins, Greek copper coins bear the figures of Dionysos and some unidentified deities. Athena (also called Pallas), Demeter, Hekate and Nike are female deities.[15] Though essentially Greek in nature, the above deities are sometimes depicted with features, which remind us of their oriential counterparts.[16]

Apollo (Pl. XXIII b)

On a series of tetradrachms struck by Eucratides II, the naked Apollo is shown as standing and holding a bow and an arrow.[17] On the Indo-Greek coinage the Greek god Apollo appears in various representations. Sometimes, the bust of Apollo appears on the obverse as we do find in the copper coinage

bearing the name of Euthydemos, Eucratides and strato I.[18] On the reverse of these coins are found horse, tripod-lebes, winged Nike or bow and quiver with strap. On the obverse of square copper coins bearing the name of Apollodotus is depicted draped figure of Apollo seated on a chair to right, and holding out a bow in his left hand.[19] On the coins of Apollodotus I and Strato I, Apollo stands to front with an arrow in the right hand and in the left hand a bow resting on the ground. While on the coins of Apollodotus, god Apollo is found naked and laureate,[20] on the coins of Strato I, he is found wearing chlamys and boots.[21] On the reverse of the coins bearing the name of Eucratides and Euthydemos, Apollo is found standing to left. On some coins of Eucratides, the standing figure of Apollo is naked,[22] while on some coins of Euthydemos the god is represented with a halo behind his head.[23] In all cases, however, Apollo is found to have held an arrow in his right hand and in his left a bow resting on the ground. We have also the figure of Apollo standing to right on the obverse of the coins of Apollodotus II, Dionysius, Hippostratus Strato II and Zoilus II.[24]

The coins of Apollodotus II show the god wearing Chlamys and boots with quiver at his back and holding an arrow with both his hands, while the bow rests upright on the ground before him.[25] His similar representations are to be found on the coins of Dionysius,[26] Hippostratus[27] and Strato II,[28] But on the coins of Zoilus II, a similar representation of Apollo is associated with a small elephant in the field.[29] The tripod-lebes, the characteristic attribute of Apollo, is generally found on the reverse of the Apollo-type coins. But on a few coins of Apollodotus I, Menander I and Zoilus II bearing tripod on the reverse, we find on the obverse a bull,[30] a bull's head[31] and an elephant[32] respectively.

On the obverse of some copper coins of the Śaka king Maues, we find Apollo standing to front with an arrow in his right hand and a bow in the left. On the reverse of these coins is depicted within dotted border a tripod-lebes.[33] The Apollo-type was seldom used by any other Śaka or Parthian ruler. Apollo plays a very important role on Greek copper coins of Bactria and India.[34] It has already been mentioned that the Apollo-type coins generally bear tripod-lebes on the reverse. But the figure of Apollo never occurs on the reverse nor does the tripod-lebes occur on the obverse of any copper coin.[35]

A study of the iconographic representations on the Indo-Greek coins of Bactria and India makes it perfectly clear that the full figure of Apollo, standing to right or to front and holding the bow and the arrow in various ways, is a common type, which was used by Apollodotus I and II, Dionysius, Hippostratus, Strato I and Zoilus I. As already noted, on a few coins of Zoilus II again an elephant appears alongwith the standing Apollo. He is seen seated only on a rare coin of Apollodotus II.[36]

In Homer, Apollo is represented as the son of Zeus and brother of Artemis. In this god, the Greeks found out a complex personality after the

5th century B.C. The recognition of Apollo as Helios, the sun god, was early but not original. His association with light may have attached some significance with the arrows that were probably intended to dispel darkness.[37] He was at the same time a god of healing, possessing the ability to inflict diseases upon men and beasts. He was recognised as the expert archer of the Olympians and occasionally took part in the war as the partisan of the Trojans but he was not recognised as the god of war. He was often associated with prophecy.[38] Apollo was the god of song and music and was the skilled performer upon the lyre.[39] He was also the protector of flocks and cattle. He was the divine guardian of navigation, a function which seems to have had its root in the wide diffusion of its cult in all Hellenic settlement. The role of Apollo as the divine founder of colonies was recognised in very early times.[40]

The evidence of the Indo-Greek coinage may be of some help to us to find out the mythological significance behind the appearance of god in the Indian context. The close connection of Apollo with the beasts like elephant, horse and bull is clearly shown by a close study of the obverse and the reverse devices.

In the Greek mythology, he was recognised as the guardian of the flocks and cattle. The theriomorphic representation of the divinities was for a long time in practice in India. The elephant stands for god Indra,[41] the horse for Sūrya[42] and the bull for Śiva.[43] From Indian point of view, the connection of Apollo with these animals bears out his complex character, as we find in the Greek mythology. On the Indo-Greek coinage itself, the elephant is often associated with the god Zeus enthroned. So the elephant might stand for royalty, victory and fortune. The horse standing for a speed in movement was also a carrier of soldiers in the battle-field. The bull symbol, which is often traced from the prehistoric age, may be associated with the cult of fertility. In any case it is difficult to characterise Apollo as the god of victory or the god of war or the god looking after the vegetation of the earth. But in him we find a combination of all these faculties together. It is not unreasonable to assume that different Greek kings invoked the god with various purposes in view. The laureate head of Apollo on some coins reminds us no doubt about his association with victory. The bow and the arrow might have had a bearing upon the belligerence of the king invoking the god. Again the halo round the head of Apollo found on some coins signifies his connection with light. But the most reasonable assumption, according to Chattopadhyay, would be that the Greek rulers, in course of their expansion in Indian territories and foundation of new settlements, naturally sought the help of the divine guardian of colonisation, who used to take delight in the foundation of new cities and in the establishment of civil constitution. But a suggestion has been made that Apollo was the god of poetry and music. This suggestion appears to be totally unacceptable in view of the fact that no musical instrument is seen in association with this Greek god.

A particular iconographic feature of Apollo represented on the Indo-Greek coinage, that is, the boots worn by him[44] establishes his relation with the Iranian Sun God, who is often depicted in sculptures with similar features including the halo round the head. Further, the association of Apollo with a bull may require us to take into consideration the Persian mythological account of Mithra as a young man in oriental dress, stabbing a bull with his dagger or standing on a bull he has thrown down.[45]

According to the beliefs recorded in the Zoroastrian mythology, the divine bull by its great generative power and sacrificial death promoted the fertility of vegetable and animal life.[46] Besides, due to oriental influence, Apollo gradually came to be recognised later on as identical with Helios, the Sun-god. The mythological and iconographic data that we can derive from the depiction of Apollo on the Indo-Greek coinage may suggest the resemblance of the god with Helios-Mithra. On the obverse of copper coins of Philoxenus, we find the Sun-god facing, radiate, clad in chiton, himation and boots, holding in the left hand a long sceptere, the rignt being extended.[47] The bow and the arrow of Apollo are found to be replaced by the sceptre. Thus, Apollo with a bow and an arrow is interpreted to be in the act of shooting at the darkness which is the most important function of the Sun-god. Assuming that Apollo is the Sun-god in the Greek religion, if we visualise him in the Indian background. Some important attributes and attendants appear to be missing. What is beyond doubt is the fact that Apollo was a composite god, having taken to himself the duties and functions of several gods.

Artemis

The figure of the Greek goddess Artemis appears on the reverse of the coins of king Diodotus of Bactria. On the obverse of these coins is found the head of Zeus and on the reverse "Artemis clad in short chiton, running to right, holding torch in both her hands, quiver-at her shoulder, and besides her a hound running towards right".[48] The goddess again appears on the coins of Demetrius. On the obverse is found the bearded bust of Herakles and on the reverse Artemis standing to front, radiate, wearing chiton and bus-kings, holds bow in the left hand and with the right hand draws an arrow from quiver at her back.[49] On the reverse of the coins of Artemidorus appears "helmeted Artemis to left, clad in skins, drawing a bow, quiver at back". On the obverse of these coins is found only the diademed bust of the king.[50] On the obverse of the coins of Dikaios Soter is found "Artemis standing to front drawing arrow from quiver at back with right hand". On the reverse of these coins is found the representation of a crowned city goddess with a lotus in her right hand.[51]

In the numismatic representation of Artemis, we find a mixture of at least two aspects in her character. Firstly, a torch in her hand or her radiate head indicates her lunar character. In the Greek mythology, while Apollo is regarded as identical with the Sun, his sister Artemis is looked upon as Moon.[52]

Secondly, the character of the huntress is quite apparent from her attributes like bow, arrow and quiver at the back. Besides, on some Greek coins, she is found to be associated with a hound. In the Homeric accounts her personality is marked by three outstanding features viz. she is a huntress and mistress of wild life, a bringer of sudden death and a virgin sister of Apollo.[53] Therefore, her lunar character is not so prominently emphasized as her character as a lady of beasts, the common epithet of ancient mother-goddess. Like her brother Apollo, Artemis was the deity of sudden death. She was, however, equally benevolent and brought prosperity to those who honoured her. She came to be regarded as the goddess of flocks and became the huntress among the immortals. Her maiden divinity is never conquered by love. She Slew Orion with her arrows because he attempted at her chastity. She changed Actaeon into a stag because he had seen her bathing. These ideas seem to emphasize upon the maintenance of an independent status of the mother-goddess. It was equally significant that she, being equipped with bows and arrows, has often been compared with the god Apollo.

Artemis, particularly venerated in Arcadia, was worshipped throughout Greece, Crete, Asia Minor and Magna Graecia. There is less connection, however, between the Greek Artemis and Artemis of Ephesus, a personification of fecundity, one of the forms of the Great Mother goddess of the orient. But still it should be remembered that the Greek Artemis was recognised as a goddess of plant life, the physician goddess of the animal and the goddess expediting the delivery of women in child birth. On rare occasions, she appears as a water goddess.[54] From these miscellaneous attributes, it may be reasonably assumed that she represented an ancient cult of mother goddess presiding over the life and death of the plants, the animals and the human-beings.

The Greeks, who settled in Bactria, seem to have identified the local goddess Anāhida with their own goddess Artemis. Anāhida corresponds to Anaitis as 'Ardvisura', 'Anahita' of the Avestan hymns. At Bactra, the capital of Bactria, stood a temple of Anāhida, which the Persian emperor Artaxerxes adorned with a magnificent status.[55] This famous statue is celebrated in the *Avestan* hymns,[56] where she is described as the high-girdled one, clad in mantle of gold having on the head a golden crown, with eight rays and hundred stars and clad in a robe of thirty otter skins of the sort with a shining fur.[57] Artemis appears in her eight rayed crown on the coins of Demetrius. Anāhida is described in the hymns of *Avestan* thus, "she is the giver of fertility, purifies the seeds of all males and wombs of all females and provides the latter at the night time with milk."[58] While we can trace the influence of the Bactrian image of Anāhida upon the Indo-Greek coin portrait of Artemis, it may be reasonably presumed that the Greek goddess represented the mother goddess granting fecundity and prosperity to the earth.[59] She seems to have been the immediate predecessor of the goddess Nānā found with a lion on the Kuṣāṇa coins and later on identified with Umā (Durgā), the consort of Śiva. Thus, in Artemis we find the trace of the mother goddess granting fecundity and

prosperity to people, a role which was played in early times by Lakṣmī in Hindu pantheon.

Helios

Helios, the Greek Sun-god, who is identified with the Iranian Mithra, is depicted on the reverse of the silver coins of Plato and Telephus and on the obverse of the coins of Philoxenus. On the coins of Plato, Helios-Mithra is found radiate, clad in chiton and chlamys in quadriga to the right.[60] On the coins of Plato, Helios-Mithra is depicted in a four-horsed chariot to front, radiate holding sceptre in the left hand and an unidentified object (probably Callipers) in the out-stretched right hand.[61] An interesting type of silver coins issued by Telephus deserves our attention in this connection. On the obverse, we find Yakṣa holding in each hand lotus stalk which develops from his serpent like legs and on the reverse is depicted "a male deity, radiate, standing facing, clad in chlamys and tunic, holding long sceptre in right hand and being accompanied by a standing female figure wrapped in mantle".[62] The male deity on the reverse may reasonably be identified with the Sun-god Helios, although it is difficult to identify the female figure accompanying him. On the reverse of the copper coins of Philoxenus is found Helios facing and radiate, clad in a chiton himation and boots. He holds in the left hand a long sceptre with the right hand extended.[63]

The portraiture of Helios riding on a four-horsed chariot on the coins of Plato closely resembles the figure of the Indian Sūrya driving in a chariot drawn by four-horses carved on one of the railing pillars of Bodh-Gayā, and also in the Anantagumphā, Bhubaneshwara and at Bhājā. It is interesting to note that the figure of the Sun-god depicted on the coins of Philoxenus served as the prototype of the figure of Helios on Mihira (Mithra) found on the coins of Kaniṣka and Huviṣka.[64] The female figure accompanying the Sun-god on the coins of Telephus was most probably intended for representing Salene (Moon goddess), who, in the Greek mythology, is referred to as the sister of Helios.

Homer describes Helios as giving light to both gods and men. He rises in the east from the ocean, moves up into heaven where he reaches the highest point at noon time and gradually descends, arriving in the evening in the darkness of west.[65] The horses and the chariot with which Helios makes his daily sojourn are not mentioned in the Illiad and Odyssey but are described by later poets. "The appearance of the Sun in the heaven reminded the Greeks of a variety of objects—a ball of fire, a head with streaming golden hair, an eye, a bow bristling with arrows or spoked wheel—but the most commanding and persistent likeness which they saw was that of a chariot and horses".[66] Although Apollo was considered to be the god of solar light, the Sun itself was personified by Helios. In Greece, the cult of Helios was very ancient and practised throughout the land.[67]

In the Vedic hymns, Sūrya and Savitṛ are two names by which the sun is addressed.[68] Sometimes the two names are interchangeable and sometimes they are used as though they represent distinct divinities. From the character ascribed to Savitṛ, it would be natural to regard him as the Sun shining in his glory and strength, while Sūrya is represented as the Sun when rising and setting.[69] Savitṛ is pre-eminently a golden god and unlike Sūrya he has two and not seven steeds. His function is to raise arms to rouse men.[70] The chief action of Sūrya is his shining for world, for gods and for men. He triumphs over the power of darkness and drives away all diseases and evils. The chariot of Sūrya is said to be drawn by one or seven horses or seven mares.[71] Savitṛ is assumed as an aspect of Sūrya, the most important aspect which wakens man to his work and priest to his sacrifice.[72] The concept of the Greek god Helios found in Homer resembles the Vedic concept of Sūrya which was later on transformed in the Purāṇas. The popularity of the Sun-god in India finds confirmation in his symbolic representations since prehistoric times.

Nike (Pl. XXIVb)

Winged Nike, the Greek goddess of victory, with her well-known attributes, the wreath and the palm branch, appears on the silver coins of Antimachus, Artemidorous and Menander. Although the deities are usually depicted on the reverse of the coins, Nike is portrayed on the obverse of the silver coins of Antimacheus. She appears often on the outstretched right hand of Zeus as on the coins of Antialkidas and Heliocles [73] On two rare coins of Strato I and Theophilus, she stands on Athena's outstretched right hand.[74] On a rare silver coin of Zoilus, Nike stands on the shoulders of Herakles and crowns him.[75] On two types of Antialkidas, Nike is depicted as being carried by an elephant walking beside Zeus [76] The figure of the standing Nike appears on the reverse of the copper coins of Antimachus I, Eucratides, Hermaeus, Menander, Strato I and Philoxenus. Nike's palm and wreath occur on the reverse of the coins of Antimachus[77] and her palm alone is depicted on some coins of Menander.[78] On a copper coin of Antimachus I, we find Nike to left, holding wreath and palm, standing on the prow of a ship.[79]

In the Greek mythology, Nike, the goddess of victory, is described as the daughter of Titan Pallas and styx and as a sister of Zelos (jealousy), Kratos (force) and Bia (violence).[80] Nike had a celebrated temple on the acropolis of Athens. Her most famous statue was erected by Augustus so commemorate his victory at Actium. Nike seems to be the counterpart of the Roman goddess victoria who, originally the protectress of fields and woods, became responsible for the Roman's success in arms as one of their most ancient divinities.[81]

The close association of Nike with Zeus, Athena and Herakles seems to be significant. Her representation on the outstretched right hand of either Zeus or Athena as a little figure on the coins of the Greeks, the Śakas and the Parthians indicates her subordinate position in relation to the divinities associated with her.[82]

It is implied that the laurels of victory were won over by the heroes of war by the grace of Zeus or Athena. The representation of Nike on the shoulder of Herakles in the act of Crowning him vividly depicts the functions of Nike as the goddess of victory. Again, her representation in the prow of a ship most probably indicates a naval victory claimed by the king on whose coins she is thus represented. Nike is sometimes found to be represented on the upraised trunk of an elephant. This is no doubt interesting from the iconographic point of view. On the coins of the Śaka king Azilises, we find Lakṣmī standing on a lotus flower with twin stalks and leaves and on each leaf stands a small elephant sprinkling water on the head of the deity.[83] In the Indian mythology Lakṣmī bestows on her worshippers not only fortune but also victory in war. That the Junāgadh Rock inscription of Skandagupta tells us how Lakṣmī, on her own accord, chose Skandagupta as the fittest one for the throne, immediately before which the Gupta prince had won a victory, may be accepted without doubt. Further it may be pointed out that while the attributes of Nike are palm branch and wreath, those of Gaja Lakṣmī are twin stalks and leaves.

Poseidon (Pl. XXIIIb)

On the reverse of the silver coins of Antimachus I appears the figure of diademed bearded Posiedon, standing, facing, wearing himation, holding a long trident in his right hand with a palm bound with fillet under his left arm [84] On the obverse of some of the copper coins of Nicias is depicted the head of Poseidon, to right, bearded, with a trident on the shoulder.[85] The trident, the characteristic attribute of Poseidon, occurs on the reverse of a big copper coin of Demetrius I.[86]

In the Greek mythology, Poseidon was pre-eminently the god of the sea. His name seems to be derived from the root meaning 'master'. It is, therefore, not impossible that originally Poseidon was the sovereign master of the entire earth. In Homer, we find that when the new kingdom was divided, the dominion of the sea was put into his hand, while earth and Olympus were set aside as common territory for all the gods.[87] Animals, which were sacred to him include the horse, the symbol of gushing springs, and the bull, symbolising either his power to fertilise or his impetuousity. In the classical art of Greece, Poseidon very much resembles Zeus. He has a similar majesty, when he is depicted standing, his chest bare, and grasping a trident.[88] Although he was the equal of Zeus by birth and dignity, he was nevertheless subject to his brother's sovereign power. But he had such keep thirst for possession that he often found himself in conflict with other gods. Of course, during the war with the giants, he fought at the side of Zeus. He was the master of sea and even lakes and rivers, in a sense, the earth belonged to him, since it was sustained by his water. Poseidon is very often identified with the Roman god Neptunus. Poseidon on the Indo-Greek Coinage represented the early stage in the development of the iconography of this god.

Dioskuroi (Pls. XXIIIb, XXIVa)

On the coins of the Indo-Greek princes of the house of Eurcatides, the Dioskuroi are depicted as mounted on horse-back and charging with spears. They are generally represented on the reverse of the gold and the silver coins of Eucratides. The palms and the piloi, the attributes of Dioskuroi, are sometimes found to replace the twin gods on the reverse of the gold and the silver coins of Eucutides.[89] On some silver coins of Eucratides one of the mounted Dioskuroi is depicted[90] and again on some bilingual coins, we find Dioskuroi standing side by side, holding spears and swords.[91] The mounted Dioskuroi are depicted on the reverse of the bilingual silver coin of Diomedes.[92] On some coins of Diomedes, the Dioskuroi are found standing, facing, holding long spears which rest on the ground.[93] A similar representation of the Dioskuroi is found on the obverse of the copper coins of Diomedes.[94]

The mounted Dioskuroi with palms and levelled spear charging to right are depicted on the reverse of the silver coins of the Śaka king Azilises.[95] On some coins of the same king, we find Dioskuroi standing side by side armed with spears.[96] Again on some coins of Azilises are represented one of the armed Dioskuroi standing facing with spear in the right hand and the left hand placed on the hilt of a sword.[97]

The Dioskuroi are two sons of Zeus, Castlor and Pollux, according to the Greek mythology. The exploits of Dioskuroi raised them to the status of heroes honoured by the Greek people.[98]

According to the tradition, Zeus placed them among the stars, in the constellation Gemini the twins.[99] Among the exploits of Dioskuroi, mention may be made of their expedition against Athens to rescue their sister Hellen from Theseus who had abducted her. He Hellen has been considered by a number of scholars as originally a divinity of light being identified now with the moon, now with the red of dawn and again with the phenomenon of a single orb of St. Elmo's fire. The appearance of the twin globes represented by Dioskuroi was regarded as favourable for the last phenomoenon which was fraught with evil. According to A.B. Cook, the Dioskuroi were originally Daemons of the morning and evening twinlight. They were honoured throughout Greece as the tutelary divinities of sailors and as protectors of hospitality. Sometimes they were regarded as presidents of public games, the inventors of war-dance and patrons of poets and bards.

The Greek twin gods may have been originally adaptation of Indian twin deities Aśvinī Kumāras. It has been suggested that Aśvin Kumāras are so-called because they ride upon horses (Aśva).[100] According to Prof. Roth, "they hold a perfectly distinct position in the entire body of the Vedic deities of life. They are the earliest bringers of light in the morning sky, who hasten on in the clouds before the dawn and prepare the way for her.[101] In the Vedic hymns, they are differently represented as the sons of the Sun, the children of the sky and the offsprings of the ocean. It has been suggested that the twin

gods were originally meant for depicting the transition from night to morning.[102] The Aśvins are regarded as physicians of gods. They are thus characteristically divine physicians who heal diseases with their remedies, restoring sight, curing the blind, sick and maimed.[103] In the character of these deities is found human element when the legends refer to their wonderful power of curing. At the same time, the Cosmical element in them is related to their luminous nature. The people in ancient time might have probably inagined the connection between the effect of light and the art of healing. However, the Aśvins, represented often as riding in a golden car drawn by horses, resemble the Dioskuroi, their luminous nature. The human element in the character of Aśvins was naturally transformed in Disokuroi. But it seems that both Aśvins and Dioskuroi were originally renowned men, who in course of time were translated into the companionship of the gods.

Iconographically the depiction of the two armed Dioskuroi standing facing, side by side, with weapons in their hands, as we find on the coins of Diomedes, has striking similarity with Skanda-Kumāra represented on the reverse of the coins of Huviṣka.[104]

Demeter

The Greek goddess Demeter appears on the reverse of the coins of Amyntas as seated on high-backed throne, holding cornucopiae in her left hand, her right hand being outstretched.[105] The deity appears as the city-goddess on the reverse of the coins of Hippostratus as standing to left, wearing modius, holding in her left hand cornucopiae, her right hand being advanced.[106] We find on the obverse of the copper coins of Philoxenus, Demeter standing to left, with her right hand raised and cornucopiae held in her left hand.[107] On some variations of this type of coins, having humped bull on the reverse, Demeter is found standing to right, with her right hand raised and cornucopiae in her left hand. With the humped bull as reverse device, we again find on the coins of Philoxenus the deity standing facing, with her right hand resting on her hip and cornucopiae in her left hand who is most probably to be identified with Demeter.

The Greek goddess Demeter corresponds to ancient Iranian goddess Ardoksho, who appears on the reverse of the coins issued by the Kuṣāṇa rulers Kaniṣka, Huviṣka and Vāsudeva.[108] The standard representation of the deity shows her standing (to right or left) or seated on a throne, having modius and nimbus, clan in chiton and himation, holding wreath and cornucopiae.[109] The cornucopiae is the horn of plenty, the horn of the goat Amalthaea by which Zeus was suckled. The horn is represented in art as overflowing with flowers, fruits and corn. Thus it is a predominantly a foreign feature. On the reverse of early imperial Gupta coinage is depicted the goddess Lakṣmī seated, facing on throne, nimbate, wearing loose robe, necklace, armlet, holding fillet in her outstretched right hand and cornucopiae in the left, her feet raised on lotus. Gradually the foreign type of deity is Indianised on the

Gupta coinage and Lakṣmī is marked by her characteristic attribute lotus, which she holds in her hand (instead of cornucopiae) and which is used as a foot stool and on which she is seated.[110]

The first part of Demeter's name is derived from an alleged Cretan word Deai that is barley and accordingly Demeter means "Barley mother" or "corn mother", for the root of the wood seems to have been applied to different kinds of grains by differnct branches of Āryans.[111] Demeter was worshipped in Attica, Arcadia, Argolis, at Delos in Crete, Asia Minor and in Sicily. In Homer's poem, Demeter is represented as the divinity of the corn. Although the primitive character of Demeter was preserved in certain of region Greece, notably in Arcadia, she appeared particularly in Attica as the goddess of the fruits and riches of the fields. She was especially the corn-goddess, wheat and barley being sacred to her. She presided over the harvest and all the agricultural operations which attend it.[112] It is implied, therefore, that the benefits of human civilisation, mainly associated with agriculture, are attributed to the favour of the goddess Demeter corresponding to Ceres ancient Roman goddess presiding over all the stages of agriculture from seeding to harvest.[113] That Demeter was the corn mother and she attended the agricultural operations are enough to indicate that she represented a part of Indian Lakṣmī. Lakṣmī also was the goddess of fertility, a usual function of a woman but she also showered upon her worshippers victory in war. The Roman goddess Tellus Maten Mother goddess, Earth, seems to personify a significant attribute to the Greek goddess Demeter who is recognised as the goddess of the Earth. Persephone, the daughter of Demeter, was forcibly carried to the underworld. This naturally enraged the goddess. Later on when she recovered her daughter, the goddess became pleased to shower blessings upon the earth in the form of agricultural productions in abundance. Persephone seems to personify the seed corn, which is concealed under the earth for a part of the year. The return of Persephone to her mother Demeter seems to suggest the growth of corn on the earth. Whatever that might be, the evidence furnished by the coins our disposal leaves hardly any doubt that Demeter was the counterpart of Indian Lakṣmī and Iranian Ardoksho.[114] In some cases, she is represented as a city goddess on the Indo-Greek and the Indo-Scythian coins. It seems to suggest that in Demeter was personified the fortune and the prosperity of the city concerned.

Hekate (Pl. XXIIIb)

Hekate never appears alone on coins. Her three-headed figure is depicted as standing upon the outstretched right hand of the enthroned or standing Zeus on the silver coins of Pantaleon and Agathocles respectively. On the reverse of the coins of Pantaleon is depicted Zeus as seated, holding in his left hand a sceptre and in the right hand the figure of the three-headed Hekate carrying torches in both hands.[115]

The Greek goddess Hekate does not appear on any other Indo-Greek coin, nor on Indo-Scythian and Indo Partian coins. In most of the representations of the god Zeus, we find on his outstretched right hand Nike, the goddess of victory instead of Hekate. It is not known whether the two were identical or not in the eyes of the Indo-Greeks. W.W. Tarn[116] suggested that the three heads of the goddess Hekate represent the crossing of three ways where the city of importance was situated. God Zeus is generally associated with Kapisā or Kapisi. So the goddess Hekate may have further indicated the location of the cross ways as she is best known as the "Diana of the crossways". In the Greek mythology, she was supposed to drive evil influences from the cross ways, doors and gates. In order to gain her favour, people used to make offerings to her at the forks of roads, her special haunts.[117] The name of the goddess Hekate is suggested to be the feminine form of a title of Apollo, the far shooter.[118] At different stages, Hekate is found to be equated in the Greek mythology, with Salene, the moon goddess in heaven, Artemis or Diana on the earth having connection with child-birth and Persephone connected with the underworld. Most probably the three heads on the figure of Hekate represent the three divinities who merged in her and gave a syncretic character.[119] The image of Hekate, at the entrance to the Athenian acropolis, portrays her as having three-bodies, all back to back one facing forward and the other two to the left and right respectively. In the outer hands of the side figures are held a pitcher and a sacrificial saucer, while each of the remaining four hands grasps a torch [120] This image according to Chattopadhyay,[121] may be compared with the Indian Trimatṛkā relief found in stone and bronze. The Trimatṛkas represent *Brāhmaṇī Kaumārī* and *Vaiṣṇavī*. The bronze composition, now preserved in the British Museum, shows these goddesses seated between Vīrabhadra and Gaṇeśa.[122] The Trimatṛkā relief no doubt depicts the three aspects of the Mother Goddess as we find in Greek protectress of the cross-roads, her eyes looking over three ways at once. Of course the philosophical outlook of the Indian iconoplastic art can hardly be traced in the Greek images.

Zeus (Pls. XXIIIb, XXIVa, XXVa)

The figure of Zeus often adorns the coins of the Indo-Greek kings, presenting different concepts of god. He is depicted either standing or seated on a throne. On the reverse of the coins bearing the name of Diodotus, the king of Bactria, is found Zeus, standing to left and hurling thunderbolt, holding aegis on left arm with an eagle in front. A wreath occurs in the field underneath the aegis.[123] The same type occurs on the reverse of the coins attributed to Demetrius[124] and Agathocles.[125] On the reverse of the coins of Agathocles is depicted in some cases Zeus standing, facing, holding out in his right hand a figure of three-headed Hekate and a sceptre in the left hand.[126] The depiction of standing thundering Zeus with an eagle occurs on the coins of Antimachus Theos. On the coins of Heliocles is represented Zeus standing

to front holding thunderbolt in his right hand and in the left hand a long sceptre, which rests on the ground.[127] The same type also occurs on the coins of Archebius.[128] On some bilingual silver coins Antialkidas, we find the sceptred Zeus walking by the side of an elephant that carries Nike, the goddess of Victory.[129]

Again on some silver coins of Peucolaus, we find "Zeus standing to left with a long sceptre in the left hand, held across the body, the right arm extended and holding a small two-horned object of an indefinite shape."[130]

Enthroned Zeus holds various attributes and objects. On the coins of Pantaleon, the god is found to hold in his left hand a sceptre and in the outstretched right hand the figure of a three-headed Hekate[131] On the coins of Agathocles, we find in the hands of the god an eagle and a long sceptre.[132] On the coins of Heliocles is depicted Zeus seated to left, holding a spear in his left hand and a small victory in his right hand.[133] This type is very common with Antialkidas. On his coins is depicted the enthroned Zeus, holding in his left hand a long sceptre which rests over his left shoulder, wreath and palm bearing Nike on his outstretched right hand with the forepart of an elephant in the field.[134] Again on some of his coins draped Zeus, seated on the throne, is depicted as holding a sceptre in the left hand and in the extended right hand palm and wreath of Nike instead of Nike himself. The wreath is grasped by the raised trunk of an elephant, whose forepart is seen.[135]

Most of Amyntas' silver coins depict the enthroned Zeus holding sceptre and palm branch in left hand and shield bearing Athena-Nike on the outstreched right hand.[136] Enthroned Zeus appears on the obverse of the coins of Telephus.[137] The god is found to hold a long sceptre in his left hand with his right arm outstretched On the reverse of the coins of Hermaeus Soter is depicted Zeus-Mithra, radiate, seated to left on throne, holding long sceptre in the left hand and callipers in the outstretched right hand.[138]

The laureated head of Zeus adorns the obverse of some Bactrian coins of Diodotus[139] and Euthydemos I.[140] The obverse of the coins of Antialkidas depicts undraped bust of thundering Zeus[141] while the diademed head of Zeus occurs on some coins of Archebius.[142] The thunderbolt, a characteristic attribute of Zeus, is found on the reverse of bilingual coins of Demetrius I[143] and on some coins of Antimachus Theos.[144]

If we study the iconic representation of Jupiter on the coins issued by the Greek kings of Bactria and India and try to draw parallels between Jupiter and Zeus, examples will not be lacking. A standing figure of Jupiter occurs on the reverse of a coin, holding a thunderbolt in his raised right hand and a kind of sheild in the left hand.[145] Again, Jupiter occurs on the reverse of a silver Drachm of Agathocles, with wings on his ankles, his left hand leans on a sceptre, right hand extended holding Diana, who has apparently but one hand, though holding two torches.[146] Again on the reverse of a gold coin

issued by Diodotus appears an erect figure of Jupiter in the act of hurling the thunderbolt; aegis on the left arm, eagle in front of the left leg; a chaplet in the field.[147] Again on the reverse of a Tetradrachm of Heliocles occurs Jupiter seated, the right arm holding a small figure of victory, the left hand resting on the spear.[148] An impartial comparison of attributes held in the hands of Jupiter and Zeus makes us believe that the two deities are one. Jupiter also holds victory in his hands like Zeus Nikephoros. Like Zeus, Jupiter appears in the role of war-god, which aspect is clear from the association of spear and thunderbolt with both Jupiter and Zeus. The significance of the numismatic representation of god Zeus is often explained in the light of a particular coin type issued by the Indo-Greek ruler Eucratides. On the obverse, we find helmeted bust of the king facing to right and on the reverse Zeus is shown seated on the throne to front, holding wreath and palm. To the right of the throne, the forepart of an elephant and to the left a pilos are visible on some specimen. The Kharoṣṭhī legend '*Kavisiye-nagaradevatā*' found along with the representation of the deity associates him with the city of Kapisi. Zeus has thus been introduced as a city divinity of Kapisi to Greek, Śaka, Pahlava and Kuṣāṇa rulers in India. But the depiction of the same deity on the coins of the Bactrian king Diodotus would probably signify just an innovation to the head of the Greek Pantheon who, according to Homer was supposed to dwell on the summit of the mount Olympus, disposing of the affairs of both the gods and the men. He was probably originally conceived of as a sky-god, wielding thunder and lightning. According to Max Muller, the name Dyauspitar in Sanskrit was equivalent to Zeus Pater in Greek, Jupiter in Latin and Tyr in old Teutonic[149] Dyaus has the honour of being the only Indo-European god, who is certainly to be recognised as having existed in the earliest period and he has been claimed for that time as a real sovereign of the gods.[150] Dyaus (the sky) and Pṛthvī (Earth) sharing six hymns in the *Ṛgveda* were regarded as the creators and preservers of all gods and creatures. But gradually the position of Dyaus was superseded by that of Indra, when the Aryans had left their original home and came to settle in India.[151]

The iconographic features of Zeus point out striking similarity with Indra.[152] Like Zeus, Indra is recognised as the god of the firmament in whose hands are held the thunder and lightening[153] The forepart of an elephant, often associated with the representation of Zeus, reminds us of Airāvata, the elephant mount of Indra. In the red sandstone relief from Mathurā illustrating the scene of the visit of Indra to the Buddha residing in Indraśāla Guhā, the god is accompanied by his mount, the elephant, A Pahārpur stone relief shows two armed Indra standing facing east, before his mount, holding an indistinct object in his left hand, his right hand being in the *varada* pose. He has a jewelled *kirīṭa mukuṭa* on his head with a halo behind it.[154] Enthroned Zeus depicted on the reverse of the coins of Hermaeus has been called Zeus-Mithra.[155] The distinguishing features are the halo round the head of the deity and callipers held in the outstretched right hand. It is significant to note

that the Iranian god Mihira is depicted on the reverse of the coins of Huviṣka as a radiate standing figure with the callipers in the right hand and sword by his side.[156] The callipers indicated that the Sun-god was the measurer of time.[157] However, Zeus Nikephoros, standing or enthroned, holding Nike in his outstretched right hand probably signifies that he often granted victory to those, who invoked and honoured him.

From the above discussion it appears that Zeus Indra was originally conceived of as the anthropomorphised sky-god having beneficial influence upon the productivity of the earth and was later on recognised as the god, who bestows upon his worshippers victory in war, kingdom and prosperity. The later inclination of the die-cutters to synthesive Zeus with Mithra is, no doubt, interesting.

Herakles (Pl. XXIVa)

Herakles appears to have been adopted by the Indo-Greek rulers of the house of Euthydemos as a family divinity. He is scrupulously excluded from the coin types belonging to the rulers of the house of Eucratides. Euthydemos I introduced Herakles on the Bactrian coinage. He is depicted either standing or seated on a rock, crowned with ivy, holding or wearing lion's skin and always carrying his club, sometimes also a catapult or a palm or a wreath. Though his chief weapons were the club and the bow and arrow, he is often seen on the Indo-Bactrian and the Indo-Greek coins as standing with his club and lion's skin. On the coins of Euthydemos I, the nude Herakles sits on a rock with his club either on stone or on his knee.

The traditions about Herakles appear in their national purity down to the time of Herodotus (484-424 B.C.). Although there may be some foreign elements,[158] the whole character of the most celebrated hero of the antiquity, his armour, his exploits and scenes of his actions are all essentially Greek. While in the earlier Greek mythology Herakles is depicted purely as a human hero, the conqueror of men and cities, he afterwards appears as a subduer of monsters and is connected in various way in astronomical phenomenon. In Homer, Herakles was the son of Zeus.

The bearded bust of Herakles in found on the obverse of copper coins of Euthydemos I, Demetrius, Euthydemos II, Lysias, Strato I, Theophilus and Zoilus I. In some cases, the bust is associated with the characteristic atttibutes of Herakles viz. the club and the lion's skin, while in others they are not found present.[159] Herakles seated to left with club on knee or seated to left with a club on rock, is depicted on the reverse of a number of coins. On the coins of Euthydemos I, naked and bearded Herakles is found seated on a rock to left, resting his left hand on the rock behind and grasping in his right hand a club, which rests on a rock in front.[160] On other coins of the same ruler, naked and bearded Herakles is seated to left on rock on which the lion's skin is spread, his left hand resting on rock behind and his right hand grasping the

club which rests on his knee.[161] The later type is found to occur on the coins of Antimachus I,[162] Agathocles,[163] and Agathocleia and Strato I.[164] On the reverse of a large number of coins, we find Herakles standing to front, and crowning himself. On the coins of Demetrius naked Herakles is represented as standing to front, crowning himself with his right hand and carrying a club and a lion's skin in the left hand.[165] The same type is found to occur on the coins of Agathocles, Lysias and Theophilus. On some coins of Teophilus, Herakles is depicted with the same attributes, standing to front and wearing ivy wreath.[166] On the reverse of the coins of Euthydemos II, we find young Herakles facing, ivy-crowned, holding in his right hand wreath of ivy and in the left a club and lion's skin.[167] The same type also occurs on the coins of Zoilus I. It is of interest to note that on some coins of Zoilus I Nike is depicted in the act of crowning standing Herakles. In this case naked Herakls stands facing, wearing ivy wreath, holding a wreath in extended right hand, a club and a lion's skin in the left hand. A little figure of Nike stands on the left shoulder of Herakles and crowns him.[168] Herakles appears on the Śaka and the Kuṣāṇa coins with almost same attributes and in similar postures. Herakles is in some cases diademed.

Arrian, quoting from the account of Megasthenes' 'Indica' observes, "Herakles is held in special esteem by the Sourasenoi, an Indian tribe possessing two large cities Methorā and Cleisobora, the river Jobares flowing through their country". The Sourasenoi are identified with the people of Sūrasena, the country with its capital at Mathurā, standing on the Yamunā (Jobares). While Methora is identified with Mathurā, Cleisobora is identified with Kṛṣṇapurī which most probably is to be identified with the present village of Gokul on the other side of the river Yamunā. R. G. Bhandarkar identified Herakles with Vāsudeva. Quintus Curtius records that an image of Herakles (Hercules) was carried in front of the infantry of Porus in his battle with Alexander and that it acted as the strongest of all incentives to make the soldiers fight well.[169] Coomaraswamy thinks that this image was one of Śiva or of Yakṣa.[170] But it appears that Arrian and Quintus Curtius referred to the same Indian deity by the name of Herakles, whoever he might be. The context in which Arrian has referred to the deity strongly supports his identification with Vāsudeva-Kṛṣṇa as proposed by R. G. Bhandarkar. On that account it may be argued that Herakles mentioned in the accounts of Curtius also represented the same god Vāsudeva Kṛṣṇa. It is not unreasonable to assume that the Greeks, who became acquainted with the exploits of Vāsudeva-Kṛṣṇa in his boyhood and youth became naturally inclined to equate him with the hero-god Herakles.

The club, an attribute of Herakles, is interesting from the iconographic point of view. It is stated in the *Matsya Purāṇa* that the placing of a club in the left hand of Viṣṇu in his Kṛṣṇa Avatāra is meritorius,[171] The appearance of Kṛṣṇa in the role of a killer of demons is depicted in the *Harivaṁśa*, the *Bhāgavata* and other Purāṇas. In the Greek mythology, Herakles the personification of super-human physical strength, played the role of protector of men

by killing monsters.[172] Both Kṛṣṇa and Herakles seem to represent the cult of hero-worship. It is now recognised that Vāsudeva, who was originally a hero of the Vṛṣṇī tribe, was later on raised to the status of an incarnation of Viṣṇu.[173]

Athena (Pallas) (Pls. XXIVb, XXVa)

Athena appears on the reverse of the silver coins attributed to Demetrius II as standing, half right, holding a long spear in her right hand and in the left hand a shield (aegis) which rests on the field.[174] On the obverse of the coins attributed to Agathocles is found the bust of Athena.[175] On the obverse and the reverse of the coins of Menander, we often find representations of Athena "helmeted, striding to left, holding aegis on outstretched left arm and hurling thunderbolt with right hand."[176] On the reverse of some coins of Menander, Athena is found to be hurling her thunderbolt to the right.[177]

The helmeted bust of Athena to right is found on the obverse of some copper coins of Menander.[178] On the reverse of the coins of Attic standard, attributed to Amyntas, is found the figure of the shield-bearing Athena on the outstretched right hand of Zeus, seated on a high backed throne holding Sceptre and palm-branch in her left hand.[179] On the reverse of the coins of Attic standard, attributed to Theophilus, is found Athena seated, holding a spear and a shield and wearing helmet, with Nike on her extended right hand.[180] Athena standing to front, with a shield and spear or standing to left with a shield and a spear is found on the reverse of the coins of Diodotus, Demetrius, Menander and Amyntas.[181] Athena standing to front and hurling thunderbolt with the right hand is portrayed on the reverse of the coins of Strato I and Nicias.[182] The type of Athena thundering to left, which has already been traced on the coins of Menander, is also found on the joint issues of Agathocleia and Strato and on the coins of Amyntas, Apollodotus, Dionysius, Epander, Polyxenus, Strato I, II and III, and Zoilus II. The type of Athena thundering to right is found on the coins of Menander and Strato I.

Homer describes Athena as the beloved daughter of Zeus. She is the patron and model worker of all those arts of life, which demand ingenuity and dexterity. On the one hand she frequently takes part in Trojan war. She does not rather as a great strategist than as one, who delights in carnage and havoc.[183] As a war goddess, her attitude was that of a defender. She took her part in the defence of Zeus from the attack of Titans.[184] The most celebrated statue of the warrior Athena was that of Parthenon, the work of phydias. The goddess, standing, wore a long Chiton; her head was helmeted, her breast covered with aegis, her right hand resting against a spear and in her left hand she held a winged victory.[185] So her oldest manifestation depicts in her the feature of a warrior goddess, who has achieved her victory. Although the functions of Athena are said to be many, her representation in the numismatic art of Bactria and India makes but more prominent her attributes as the warrior goddess, for which the epithet "*Promachus*" (who fights in the foremost rank) belongs to her. The epithet 'Alalcomencis' (who repulses the enemy)

also belongs to her. It is suggested that she was in origin a storm and lightning goddess. Hence, her normal attribute is the aegis, which in primitive times signified the stormy night.[186]

The representations of Athena as hurling thunderbolt to front, to left and to right on the Indo-Greek and Indo-Scythian coins not only depict her significant role as a warrior against Titans or the enemies but also recalls her original attribute of the goddess of lightening. Again, she is often associated with a shield and a spear on the coins. It resembles closely the representation of the warrior Athena in the classical art. The poetic epithet Pallas joined to the name of Athena is derived by some from the Greek word meaning 'to strike' or from the Greek 'Girl'. However, the analysis does neither show Athena as goddess of the arts of peace or as goddess of prudent intelligence for which scholars have seen in Athena a personification analogous to that of the Vedic Sarasvatī. The Greek divinity seems to be more analogous to the Vedic Indra, who is represented as hurling thunderbolt against the demon. Indra is supposed to be the counterpart of Greek Zeus, whose attributes are the sceptre in left hand and the thunderbolt in his right hand.[187] Like Athena, Zeus is found represented on the Indo-Greek coins as hurling thunderbolt.[188] It seems, therefore, that the functions of Zeus were discharged to a great extent by Athena, thus indicating a status equal to that of the god Zeus. Athena, therefore, was evolved in a society which according to B. Chattopadhyay had not yet become thoroughly patriarchal in character, where the male god is supposed to have held the predominant status and the female deities were relegated to subservient position.[189] However, in addition to the functions of Zeus-Indra, we may trace in the attributes of Athena some traces of the Hindu war goddess Mahādevī, the killer of demons. Of the many derivations proposed for the name of Athena, the Sanskrit "*Vadh*" (to strike) and 'adh" (hill) have been suggested. It may be mentioned that Durgā or Pārvatī in the Hindu mythology is supposed to be the resident of the Himālayan mountain as Athena is that of Olympus. The Hindu war goddess is found to have upheld the task of the Vedic Indra and appeared in the illustrious role of the striker of enemies.

It has been suggested by James Frazer[190] that the goat was at one time a sacred animal or embodiment of Athena. It is inferred from the practice of representing the goddess clad in goat-skin (aegis). The goat was neither sacrificed to her as a rule, nor allowed to enter her great sanctuary, the Acropolis at Athens. But there was an exception to the rule. Once a year, the goat was driven on the Acropolis for necessary sacrifice. From this practice, it is inferred by Frazer that if a goat was sacrificed on the Acropolis once a year, it was sacrificed in the character of Athena herself. It is further conjectured that the skin of the sacrificed animal was placed on the statue of the goddess and formed the aegis, which would have thus been renewed annually. The ritual of making sacrifices of goats at the time of the worship of Śakti is

also recognised in India, although an exception to this rule is also found.[191] Chattopadhyay rightly asserts that the sacrifice of goats during the worship of Durgā. in no way, suggests that it is an emblem sacred to the goddess as in the case of Athena. In the Vedic literature, we find reference to Ajā Ekapadā (the one footed goat), described in the epic texts as one of the eleven Rudras and an epithet of Śiva.[192] In the sacrifice of goat (ajā) before the goddess, we may trace a tendency of the primitive age of holding the superior status of the Mother-Goddess by subduing the animal who represented the male deity.

As a result we find that the coins issued by the Greek kings of Bactria and India depict on both the obverse and the reverse a galaxy of deities both Indian and Greek. Particularly only those Greek deities were portrayed on the coins meant for circulation in the Indian empire of the Greek kings, which had a good number of similarities with their Indian Counterparts. Besides, there is a trace of tendency on the part of the mintmasters to Indianise the character of the Greek gods which becomes amply clear in the case of Herakles, who has been sought to be identified with Kṛṣṇa, the Nṛṣṇī hero of India. Thus, there is an intermingling of Indian and Greek religious ideas, which is traceable on the coins issued by the Greek kings.

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4

Deities and Symbols on the Saka and Kusana Coins

After passing away of the rule of the Śuṅgas, India was gradually passing under the sceptre of the Śaka and the Kuṣāṇa kings, who were decidedly of foreign origin. These Śaka and Kuṣāṇa kings had issued coins in gold, silver and copper in large numbers, firstly to promote the trade and commerce with the countries abroad and secondly to immortalise themselves in the annals of the world. Maues, Azes I, Azilises, Azes II, Gondophares, Vonones, Kujula Kadphises, Wema-Kadphises, Kaniṣka I, Huviṣka, Vāsudeva etc. had issued coins, the figures on the obverse and reverse of which constitute an interesting study on iconography. The deities that appear on the coins of the Śakas and the Kuṣāṇas belong not only to the Brāhmaṇical religion but also to the Persian, Greek and Buddhist religions. One of the striking features of the Kuṣāṇa coinage is the depiction of Śākyamuni Buddha in the anthropomorphic form for the first time in the history of Indian iconography. Though the view has been sought to be controverted, it still stands as the most popular theory. The image of Lord Buddha is based on the features of the Master as depicted in the images from Gāndhāra and Mathurā. The coins of the Kuṣāṇas, therefore, make a definite departure from their earlier ones in the respect that here we are presented with the image of the Buddha in the anthropomorphic form.

Another striking departure from the earlier coinage was the change of metal from silver to gold. The credit of issuing the first gold coin goes to illustrious Wema-Kadphises of the Kuṣāṇa dynasty, who ruled during the 1st Century A.D. The depiction of Indian (both Brāhmaṇical and Buddhist), Iranian, and Greek deities in varied forms on both the sides of the coins merely indicates the liberal idea of the king and imagination of the mint-masters. The Śakas and the Kuṣāṇas had migrated to India from central Asia and China and the froeign influence on the drapery and otherwise of the deities could not be overlooked. But the tendency towards Indianisation was clearly traceable. The coins of the Śakas and the Kuṣāṇas present the deities

in varied forms and poses. Among the Śakas and the Kuṣāṇas the latter are by far very rich in respect of issuing gold coins with deities of various cults.

Śiva (Pls. XXVIIIa-b XXIXa-b)

Of all the deities that make their appearance on the Śaka and the Kuṣāṇa coinage, Śiva is the most popular because he figures very frequently with numerous features and postures. Kuṣāṇa is an illustrious name to the students of Eastern art and antiquities as well to those of political history. The oriental creative genius found its manifestation in the Kuṣāṇa period through different branches of art. One of them was coinage.[1] The appearance of the Kuṣāṇas on Indian horizon opens up a new chapter in the study of the iconographic features of Śiva. The Śaiva cult assumes various forms on their coins.[2] Śiva had his birth in the religious beliefs of the Harappan people and evolved further in the Vedic period after his identification with Rudra. The deity has two divergent traits—destructive and beneficent. His personality is fully developed in the epics and the *Purāṇas*, where he is eulogised as the highest god or *Para-Brahma*. The early foreign rulers of India, namely Gondophares[3] and Maues[4] issued coins with the figure of Śiva, in which the deity is shown with a trident and palm-branch and a club and a sceptre. It is strange that various forms of Śiva appear on the coins from very early period and he is frequently mentioned in early literature, yet he is rarely referred to in the inscriptions prior to the Gupta age. In the subsequent ages numerous epigraphic references to Śiva are met with, which provide a store-house of material for the study of Śaiva sects and development of his iconography. The epigraphic evidences go to support and corroborate the literary evidences. By the end of the Gupta period, Śaiva pantheon was fully developed. The Allahabad pillar Inscription refers to Paśupati in connection with Gaṅgā.[5] What exactly impressed these foreign rulers to depict Śiva on their coins is difficult to decide with exactitude. On the coins of Maues, Śiva figures with a club and a trident in his hands, with robes flowing.[6] He stands facing with his left leg slightly advanced and head bent a little towards the left, holding the long trident in his right hand and a palm-branch in his left. The left hand rests on the hip (*Kaṭihasta*). Faint traces of *Jaṭā* may be noticed on his head. The identity of the god becomes perfectly clear because the trident, his emblem par-excellence, is there. E.J. Rapson describes another variety of the deity with his right hand extended and a trident in his left hand.[7] Figure 9 on Pl. XX of Gardner's book has been described as follows : It shows this second variety of Śiva on Gondophares' coins. The standing posture of the god in this type is exactly similar to that of Śiva (undoubtedly so) on some gold coins of Wema-Kadphises, where the deity is depicted without his mount, though there is a little difference in the placing of attributes in the hands (Pl. I, fig. 19). Thus the object held in the right hand of the latter figure is not

simply trident but trident and battle-axe combined and the object hanging down from the left arm is the skin-garment, the palm-branch being absent.

There is close similarity in the slightly bent pose of the body. It suggests the *dvibhaṅga* pose. On this basis it may be said that the figure in question is one of the Greek deity Poseidon because he also holds trident as his attribute. In addition, the deity has a palm-branch in one of his hands and this exclusively Greek insignia strengthens the conjecture placed above. Other variety noticed by Rapson, i. e., the palm branch is absent. The epithet *Devavrata* applied to Gondophares on most of his coins may be significant, it is likely that 'Deva' here does not simply mean 'god' but means god Śiva as suggested by several passages in Hiuen-Tsang's *Si yu-ki*.[8] Considering these facts one will be fully justified in rejecting Tarn's statement that Śiva does not appear in person on coins till those of the Kuṣāṇas.[9] While dealing with the tribal and local coinage earlier, it has already been indicated that Śiva appeared in the anthropomorphic form much earlier on the coins of Ujjayini, a place which was the centre of Śiva worship and which housed the famous Mahākāla temple. Tarn appears to have deliberately sidetracked the point. On a round copper seal discovered at Sirkap in the year 1914-15, Śiva appears with a trident in left hand and a club in right hand; it is biscriptual, bearing the legend '*Śivarakṣita*' in Brāhmī and Kharoṣṭhī characters of the first century A D. or a little earlier. The standing pose of the figure is slightly dissimilar to that of the same god on the coins of Gondophares and Wema-Kadphises just discussed; the left leg is placed similarly but the right one with the bent knee is stretched forward. The club in the right hand is worthy of note, because it has great resemblance with the knotted club in the hands of Herakles appearing on the Indo-Greek coins. The treatment of the whole figure is undoubtedly Hellinistic, though the subject itself and part of the motif, are purely Indian (cf. the loin cloth and the turban on the head).[10]

Śiva appears on the obverse of some copper coins of Maues. The device on a British museum coin of Maues has been described by Gardner as 'male figure left, Chlamys flying behind; holds club and trident[11] but whitehead describes a Panjab Museum specimen of the same variety of Maues' coins as a male deity striding to left with flowing draperies, holding club in right hand and long spear or sceptre in left.[12] If the two plates are subjected to close comparative study it will be seen that both the specimens belong to the same variety of Maues' square copper coins, and Gardner's description, though short, is more correct. In fact, the peculiar knotted club in the right hand and the trident held over the left shoulder in the left and the characteristic stride leave no doubt that the god is identical with the one on the seal of *Śivarakṣita*, where the very name one protected by Śiva shows that the god is Śiva.[13] Thus this is an undoubted representation of Śiva on a coin of Maues, and we can now say, observes J. N. Banerjea that Śiva makes his appearance on some coins of alien rulers of India much earlier than on those of Gondophares. But

we do not find Nandī, the bull mount of Śiva on the above noted coins. For the absence of Nandī, his bull mount, there is no satisfactory explanation. However, Śiva was portrayed on the coins of Maues and Gondophares. What we find on the coins of the foreign rulers was sincere effort on the part of the Śaka mintmasters to portray Śiva in various aspects. But the numerous symbols and attributes of Śiva including rosary, lion or leopard skin, deer, Nandī, the bull mount, noose in the terrific aspect were not found depicted on the coins of Maues, Gondophares, Azes, etc., which can be explained away by saying that the iconography of Śiva did not reach the stage of maturity. Rather the foreign influence on the coin-devices of Maues and Gondophares could be easily traced. On the obverse of Maues' coins[14] we find a male figure to front, with an elephant-goad over his left shoulder; elephant-goad as an attribute of Śiva appears on the coins of Kaniṣka and Huviṣka, and it is probable that this figure here also represents Śiva. Those figures, which carry only a trident in their hands and sometimes trample on a dwarfish figure are to be identified as Poseidon; he appears thus on the coins of Antimachus Theos. But the composition reminds us of the Indian one in which Śiva tramples on Apasamāra-Puruṣa.[15] Excavations at Sirkap in Taxila have yielded a Bronze seal, which depicts Herakles trampling down a bull-shaped dragon, the Kharoṣṭhī legend on it being tentatively read as '*Tidusa Vibhumitrasa*' (?).[16] Konow definitely read it as '*Badusa Viśpamitrasa*' and translated it as 'of young Brāhmaṇa Viśvāmitra'.[17] The figure most probably represents Śiva as Viśvāmitra, the name of the person in this seal being after the name of the god portrayed here. Śiva was friendly to the entire world and hence, the name. Śiva literally means welfare and Viśvāmitra also has the same meaning to convey. Viśvāmitra is, therefore, one of the names of Śiva. It is therefore, the figure of Śiva in his Viśvāmitra aspect, which requires him to shower blessings upon the world. The bull below the left leg of the principal figure is significant and so also the epithet '*badu*' and the name Viśpamitra (Viśvāmitra) are significant. The name is one of the various appellations of Śiva as he was the friend of the world, what is exactly meant by the term Viśvāmitra. That the figure under review here was sought to be inentified with Herakles is natural because these coins could not ultimately escape the foreign influence because the issuers themselves were under foreign influence. J. N. Banerjea has rightly made efforts to explain the trampling of a dwarfish figure by a deity holding trident by comparing it with the event of the killing of and Apasamāra-Puruṣa. He was the representative of the evil forces on this planet and we also learn that Śiva was portrayed as killing the evil forces in the terrific aspect. The weapon trident is the exclusive attribute of Śiva and it can be none other than Śiva killing Apsamāra-Puruṣa. J. N. Banerjea describes it as an intrusion of Indian elements in the coin-devices of the early foreign rulers.[18]

The most noteworthy representations of Śiva, from the iconographic point of view, are those that are portrayed on the Kuṣāṇa coins -- the coins of Wema-Kadphises, Kaniṣka, Huviṣka and Vāsudeva. In the Kuṣāṇa coins,

the number of hands and heads of Śiva not only multiply but the attributes of varying nature, which are placed in the hands of Śiva, are also important iconographically. The earliest iconic representation of Śiva on the Kuṣāṇa coins is found on the coins of Wema-Kadphises and the god is invariably two armed. His right hand almost without exception holds a tridedt or a trident battle-axe and the left hand is shown hanging downward and carrying a water-vessel (*Kamaṇḍalū*) with the upper skin garment slung round the fore arm.[19] We find a coin of Dhāraghoṣa, the Audumbara chief, where the figure of Viśvāmitra is portrayed. J. N. Banerjea has measured certain images now housed in various museums of India with a view to see as to what extent the images of the Brāhmaṇical and the Buddhist deities follow the norms laid down in the texts. On the basis of the measurement of the various parts of the images and their comparison with the texts on iconography, Banerjea came to the conclusion that to a great extent the images tally with the instructions laid down in the early Indian texts on iconography. But such a measurement in case of figures on the coins is not possible because of the smallness of the place to accommodate the directions of the texts. It may not also have been possible for the minimasters to place all the symbols and attributes connected with the deity. But it is not fair to take shelter behind the plea of the smallness of the space to explain away the absence of important symbols and *vāhanas* like bull in case of Śiva on the coins of Maues and Gondophares. It is of course true that by depicting the upper skin garment on the body of the deity, the mintmasters have tried to depict Śiva. The treatment of the *Jaṭā* differs in individual specimens, two modes being discernible, one where the matted locks are gathered together ending in a knob just on the centre of the head, while in other mode, beneath it is shown a convex shaped object which may be the hair treated in a fashion similar to that on the head of Śiva in the Chattreśvara coin of the Kunindas.

But on the coins of Wema-Kadphises and other Kuṣāṇa kings, Śiva is sought to be depicted with clarity, where we find him radiate, standing to front with his head to left; wearing necklace, with a long trident in right hand; behind is a bull to right on which the deity appears to be leaning.[20]

Here trident, the indispensable insignia of Śiva and Nandī, his bull mount, appear which make the identification easily understandable to laymen. Because the association of bull as Śiva's mount and trident or trident-battle-axe combined as his weapon par excellence is probably as old as his cult. On coin no. 33,[21] Śiva makes his appearance with flames issuing from his head but not otherwise radiate, and gourd and tiger skin are found in his left hand. But the bull is significantly absent from the coins. On one copper coin of Wema-Kadphises, the deity seems to be polycephalous. Cunningham has, however, described the figure simply as Śiva. The two-handed Śiva has got many attributes in his hands. On yet another coin[22] preserved in the Museum of the Asiatic society of Bengal, Śiva is shown two-armed and has a spear in his right hand as the attribute. The association of spear as the attribute of Śiva in yet

another coin[23] may be intended to emphasize the terrific aspect of Lord Śiva. It may mean that the god is ready to kill the demon and evil forces. Śiva is further portrayed on a coin of Wema-Kadphises[24] where the god stands by the bull. The portrayal of Śiva on the coins of the Śakas and the Kuṣāṇas was not the only way of representing the god. While the anthropomorphic representation of Śiva was popular, the theriomorphic representation of Śiva was also not unknown to the mintmasters. It becomes clear from a coin of Azes,[25] on the obverse of which a bull to right occurs. It is very easy to find out how much sacred the bull with a high hump was to Lord Śiva. The coins of Wema-Kadphises offer little variety. The reverses, without a single exception, are confined to the worship of god Śiva, who is represented standing alone, holding a trident in his right hand, with the tiger's skin on his left arm and a water vessel in the hand and accompanied by his bull *Nandī*.[26]

Three gold staters of Vāsudeva,[27] the Kuṣāṇa king, depict on their reverse two-armed Śiva with curly hairs and the speciality of the coin is the presence of noose or (*pāśa*). On Vāsudeva's coins is found not only three-headed and four-armed Śiva;[28] but also three-headed and two armed Śiva.[29] The four-armed Śiva has also been depicted on a coin of Hiviṣka.[30] Śiva appearing on Kaniṣka's coins also holds a noose in his hand.[31] On the particular coin of Vāsudeva where the god holds a noose (*pāśa*), the bull appears to his left. So there is no doubt as to the perfect identification of Śiva. Coming to noose (*pāśa*) being held by Śiva in one of his hands, Couningham describes him as identical with Yama, Pāśī or Pāśapāṇī,, the god of death. But J. N. Banerjea has pointed out that the association of Śiva with noose is old. In the later developed theological doctrines of the Śaiva system, noose (*pāṣa*) is very intimately connected with the god. The deity is obviously Śiva because the trident also is there. A term of frequent occurrence upon both the gold and copper coins is *OHPO*, the meaning and origin of which are undetermined.[32] Mr. J. Prinsep considered it possible that it might be intended for Sanskrit 'Arka', a name of the sun. Prof. Lassen suggests that Ugra, (i. e. the fierce) is a name of Śiva and the word is usually met with in conjunction with a figure of Śiva holding a trident in his left hand and leaning on his bull Nandī.[33] On the coins of Kaneṣki, the word 'ugra' upon a gold and a copper coin is found in association with a figure having four arms, in one of which is not a noose but the regal fillet; one arm holds a trident; another a small Indian drum.[34] On some gold coins, we have some indistinct object in place of the two upper arms, but this is no doubt an error of the original die or of general ventura's draughtsman.[35] The costume and the style of the figure on the copper coins certainly and possibly on the gold coins are feminine and in that case the person can scarcely be designated by a masculine noun. Although, therefore, the emblem is of a very Indian aspect, it is doubtful if Śiva be intended. Ugra also, although it is an appellation of Śiva, is not of frequent use and the objection raised by Max Muller against the deriviation of *OHPO* applies equally to its originating from Ugra, as it is to the Magian Persian and not

to the Indian Sanskrit that we should naturally look for the appellation of of Magin divinities. Any way, a close look of the figures on the coins, their dress, their postures and their attributes including noose, trident, bull and crescent over the head of the deity hardly leave any doubt regarding the fact that it was Śiva. The Crescent over the head of the deity, with bull behind[36] occurring on the reverse of a gold coin makes the identification of Śiva with 'Oesho' clear beyond all shades of doubt. This word can more possibly be read as 'OMPO' standing for Umeśa, which is one of the names of Śiva. On some coins,[37] Śiva appears in the pose of a yogī with the upper half of the body naked, the lower covered with the Indian *dhoti*.

On the coins of Kaniṣka and Huviṣka, the iconography of Śiva acquires a new orientation and both the two-armed and the four armed figures are found with a variety of attributes reminiscient of the varied iconography of later days.[38] Śiva here almost invariably appears without his mount and when he is two-armed he carried his trident in his right hand and gourd in the left (Whitehead suggests the possibility of the later being a human head, but that is unlikely). On some copper coins in the Indian Museum, Śiva grasps a spear, as has been indicated earlier or a staff (*daṅḍa*) with his right hand while the left hand rests on a club. *Daṅḍa* or the staff has been an attribute of Śiva from very early times. Śiva appears in the form of a four-armed male deity to front.[39] In his two right hands, he carries a kettle-drum and a water-vessel with the mouth downwards, while in the left hand he holds a trident and an antelope. This portraiture of Śiva is in the direction of attaining iconographic perfection as we know that drum or *ḍamaru* of Śiva has been the source of integration to the Indian nation. Water vessel was also the attribute of Śiva in his *Yogīc* aspect, because with the water Śiva or for that matter any other saintly personality used to pacify the earth. About the antelope or tiger or leopard's skin, we know that these skins were used to purify the ground under seat which was occupied by the deity. On another coin[40] Śiva (four-handed) is found holding a wreath in one of his hands. We find the deities wearing rosary or wreath to add divinity to their personality.

On yet another coin of Huviṣka god Śiva (four-handed) is facing nimbate; the only peculiarity being that the god has a thunderbolt in one of the hands. The presence of a thunderbolt makes the indentity of the god confused.[41] Cunningham and R.B. Whitehead find in place of *Vajra* or thunderbolt a drum in Śiva's hand.[42] But V.A. Smith has identified the object as *Vajra*, which according to J.N. Banerjea, closely resembles the thunderbolt held by *Vajrapāṇī*,[43] the attendant of the Buddha in the Gāndhāra art. A lightning shaft and a thunderbolt are occasionally assigned to Rudra in the *Ṛgvedic* hymns.[44] The Vaiṣṇava symbol held in the hand of Śiva seems to show the interesting composite-icon of the subsequent days.[45] As it is said, he is the binder of individual souls, as he is also the loosener of them.[46] Though Śiva is specially associated with the act of *saṁhāra* (destruction) or *Pralaya*

(absorption) in the Hindu concept of Trinity, an exclusive worshipper of Śiva thinks him no less associated with other two acts of *Sṛṣtī* (creation) and *Sthiti* (preservation) attributed to Brahmā and Viṣṇu respectively. Śiva is also endowed with the acts of *anugraha* or *prasāda* and *tirobhāva* (power of concealment). In the Brāhmaṇical texts, Śiva is described as the master of all created beings and is often described as Paśupati, Bhūtanātha, etc. He is the great lord (Māheśvara), greatest of the gods (Mahādeva) and the beloved husband of Umā (*Umeśa*). On the coins of Wema-Kadphises, the king assumes the little "Māheśvara" i. e., devoted to the great lord Śiva. On some coins of Kaniṣka, antelope or goat[47] is found accompanying Śiva, which most probably signifies his Paśupati aspect.

In the literature, Śiva has been described as three-headed, which gets incidental corroboration from the coins of Vāsudeva, Huviṣka, etc. The scholars may conjecture the three-headed figure being that of Skanda-Kārttikeya but for fear of the attribues placed in the hands of Śiva. Moreover, the three-headed Śiva has logical explanation. It will be of interest in this connection to study one of the most-known sculptures of Elephanta (Bombay) and ascertain its real nature.[48] This early mediaeval relief of gigantic proprotion was carved with exquisite artistic skill on the surface of the back wall of the cave facing its entrance door and was usually described as Trimūrtī by early scholars. A bust containing three faces, the central and the right being placed in form and the left one being of a terrific character, is met with. The previous scholars opined that the first two stand for Brahmā and Viṣṇu while the last one stands for Rudra-Śiva; the composite icon illustrated according to this view, the idea underlying the Brāhmaṇical triad. But this interpretation was rightly challenged by Gopinath Rao, who suggested that it represented really an aspect of the God Śiva himself. But his description of it as Maheśamūrti is not also quite correct. Stella Kramarisch appears to have accepted Rao's identification, though she described it as the Mahādeva of Elephanta island with Dvārpālas'; the central, right and left faces were named by her as Tatpuruṣa, Vāmadeva and Aghora respectively.[49] It is said that the real nature of the face on the right has not been understood. The face on the right appears in all probabilities to be one of feminine. A careful study of the reproduction given will convince anyone that demure and downcast eyes with the finely drawn brows, the distinct part of the lower lip, the receding chain, the jewelled curls tastefully arranged on the forehead and other features not only differentiate it from the other two faces, but also characterise it as the face of a female figure.[50] This is further substantiated by a sculpture of about the same age hailing from Padhvli (Madhya Pradesh) now in the Gwalior Museum.[51] It also represents a three-faced bust, the placid cantral face and the terrific right face being masculine in character, the face on the left being femine (the order of the arrangement of faces in this relief is thus a little different from that of the Elephanta sculpture). The female face on the left is characterised by the

peculiar hair arrangement on the head, the tiny lotuses on the lower part of the coiffure, the particular ear-rings, the mirror in the hand associated with this face and other features. Thus, some at least of these three faced sculptures of the early mediaeval times really represent a composite form of Śiva where his two aspects, *saumya* and *raudra* are combined with his Śakti Umā. A passage in the *Mahābhārata* laid emphasis on his two *tanus* (forms of Saumya and Raudra and ancient poets like Kālīdāsa and others also allude to the primaeval divine parents of the universe in one breath.[62] We may therefore, assume that the portraiture of three-faced Śiva on the coins conveys the same idea about the composite icon of Śiva in his Raudra and Saumya aspects with his Śakti Umā.

The appearance of the Kuṣāṇas on the Indian horizon marks the beginning of a new chapter in the study of the iconographic features of Śiva. The Śaiva cult assumes various forms on their coins. The representation of Śiva given by P. Gardner has been discussed by J. N. Banerjea. The device may be exploited to trace the beginning of composite icon of Harihara in the subsequent days which are of much interest. Among the plates of the Panjab Museum catalogue, we have come across an interesting representation on a gold coin of Kaniṣka of late Kuṣāṇa period. According to Whitehead, the icon on the reverse side of the coin is the same as the representation on Vāsudeva's gold coin. Whitehead has given the following description in his catalogue : Two-armed Śiva, standing to front with noose in right hand and long trident in left; behind him bull standing to left. Legend Oesho (OHPO). But a closer scruitiny reveals the following features[63] :—

(i) in contrast to the right chest, the left side has a bosom of a woman with a round and well-developed breast.

(ii) a necklace adorns the neck, and

(iii) the right half of the chest has a *yajñopavīta*.[64]

If it is true then this particular coin would claim to represent one of the earliest efforts on the part of the numismatists to portray the Ardhanārīśvara form of Śiva. This coin may help trace the development of iconography of Ardhanārīśvara. The iconographic features of Ardhanārīśvara Śiva are given in the Agamas. A beautiful and detailed description of Ardhanārīśvara occurs in the *Matsya Purāṇa*. In accordance with the description the concept of the image should be half-man and half-woman. The right half of man should be adorned with a *jaṭā mukuṭa* with a crescent moon on the head. In the right there should be *makarakuṇḍala*, *Sarpakuṇḍala* or an ordinary *kuṇḍala* and the right half of the forehead should have one half of an eye marked in it. The image of Ardhanārīśvara should have two, three or four arms. The whole of the right side should be adorned with the ornaments peculiar to Śiva and the chest on the right side should be exactly of a man. On the right side the garment should cover the whole body below the loins up to the knee only and the material of the garment is the tiger-skin and the silk.

On the right half of the chest there should be a *nāgtyajñopavīta*. On the head of the left side there should be a *Krandamukuta* or a fine knot of hair well-combed and divided or both. On the forehead of this half, half *tilaka* mark, contiguous to the half eye of Śiva should be shown. In the left ear, there should be a *kuṇḍala* know as *bālikā*. If there are only two-arms, the left one may be hanging below or keeping in it a mirror, a parrot or a flower, or it may be bent or resting upon the head of the bull. On the left there should be a round and well-developed breast of a woman.

It may be argued that the left half of the head of the figure should have been plaited and left should have held a mirror a flower or a parrot. The legend should have been '*Nana Oesho*' instead of simply '*Oesho*'.

Of course due to defaced representation it becomes very difficult to explain the distinction between the male and the female features. Decidedly many of these cantentions go against the plausible proposition but it must be borne in mind that a lady ordinarily stands with the left leg released in an easy manner; and this may further be necessary in order to differentiate between the leg of a man and a woman of the same figure, which appears to be the case on coin as well. That leg is covered up to the half with folds possibly of *sārī*. Further, non-appearance of other things should more aptly be attributed to the smallness of the coin; the possible foreign maturity of the mintmaster and the dust of the times. Eveu if the three assertions are rejected[55] and it is held that the mintmaster was Indian, then it may be assumed that the craft-master was not strictly adhering to the iconographic norms prescribed and traits and features detailed in the iconographic text. This may be merely an attempt on his part to represent the Ardhanārīśvara form of Śiva. One quarter stater of Huviṣka has two figures, one male and the other female, standing and facing one another, the former having been described as Oesho and the other is Nānā. Banerjea opines that there can be little doubt that here Nānā is identified by the die-cutter with Umā, the consort of Śiva, whose figure is also to be found on a unique coin of the same Kuṣāṇa ruler, where the goddess was correctly described as OMMO by the die cutter. This impelled the die-cutter belonging to later Kuṣāṇa period to marge both the deities in one; it is significant that this union met with a public success in the sculptures of succeeding ages.

It may be confirmed by the statement of J. N. Banerjea that 'it should also not be forgotten that by the time of Huviṣka, the movement for cult amalgam and for combining the iconography of the two or more different cult divinities had already begun.[56]

After all, art is an expression of mind in solid. The general pulse of the public had stirred the die-cutter and it made him pay homage in his own humble way to the feelings of the masses that has ever reigned supreme. By way of experiment, puffing up one breast of the figure, he tried to show what distinguished a woman from a man. Thus it was most probably an early representation of Ardhanārīśvara on the coin and the example noted above

presents a very fine example of Śiva in his Ardhanārīśvara form and the portrait on the coin may be described as a very good beginning in this direction. On a gold coin of Huviṣka[57] appears a four-armed male figure (Oesho) standing to left, facing a female figure (Nānā), who stands to right. Oesho is nimbate and holds a deer in his lower left hand, while his upper right hand holds a drum and the lower right a vessel. Nānā diademed holds a flower (lotus) in her right hand; a four-pronged symbol appears between the figures with border of dots. The legend on the left is *Nānā* and on the right it is *Oesho* It is dated in the 2nd-3rd century A.D.

In this connection it may be mentioned that a lady holding a lotus, delineated by the side of the figure of Oesho, on some coins of Huviṣka, is described as Ommo. There is a lot of controversy centring round the identity of the deity Nānā. While some say that she belonged to the class of Zoroastrian deities, others refute it by saying that she is an Indian goddess, particularly associated with Śiva, in the aspect of being her consort, a view to which B. N. Puri[58] and later B. N. Mukherjee[59] fully subscribed. Of course, Nānā the Mother Goddess and her worship was popular throughout West Asia and Iran. B. N. Puri puts the record straight and says that the representation of the goddess Nānā or Nanaiā on the Kuṣāṇa coins has baffled the numismatists even to this day, In the beginning the historians held the view that the goddess on account of her peculiar name was either a Greek or a Zoroastrian goddess. Sir Aurel Stein remarked as follows : 'In the rank of Zoroastrian deities, the Goddess Nānā, very frequent on the coins of all Turushka kings, cannot fairly claim a place. Although her cult is found in various localities of Iran, as over a large part of western Asia, one cannot doubt her non-Iranian origin. She never received the place of recognitlon in the Zoroastrian religion. Though there are instances where Nānā has been sought to be amalgamated with Avestic Anāhitā and in syncretic ages, these evidences are not conclusive enough to prove that her worship in Indo-Sythia was in any way associated with Zoroastrianism'.[60] It evidently preceded and outlasted the latter. Her name is found on the coins of an earlier king, who makes use of the type of Eucratides and it still occupies a prominent place on those of Vāsudeva from which all the Zoroastrian types have disappeared. Let us now see the exact icon of Nānā as represented on the Kuṣāṇa coin as given by B. N. Mukherjee. The name Oesho seemes to have been based on the word *visha*, one of the Prakrit rendering of Sanskrit *vṛsha*. (We may compare Oesho with the forms Oado/Vata). Oeski/Huviṣka, Kaneṣko/Kaniṣka etc. as Vṛsha or bull on several early Indian coins is considered to be the theriomorphic representation of Śiva, the word Oesho=*Vṛṣa*=*Viśa* may refer to him and not only to his mount.[61] OMMO probably stands for Umā (or for Amma/Ambā ?). The god with the goddess on the coins bearing legend OHPO was, however, identified by Dr. R. Bhandarkar[62] with Umeśa or Lord Śiva because Nandī, his bull mount is there along with the legend OHPO. It is noteworthy that the god holds

trident. The question that naturally arises is as to who was this goddess Nānā who was fit to be associated with Śiva ?

Umā was another name of Durgā or Ambā. If the word OMMO refers to Umā, her relations with Ambā, the city-goddess, is also indicated by the flower held by her.

On a few other pieces of Huviṣka, the female figure standing by the side of Oesho is referred to as Nānā.[63] This numismatic evidence thus distinguishes Nānā as the concort of Śiva and identifies or at least associates her with Umā alias Ambā.

It appears that there was the concept of the divine maternity which was common to Ambā, Umā, and Nānā and this led to the identification of each with others.

Some coins bearing the name of Azes have on the reverse the figure of a bull standing to right in a posture identical with that of the same animal on the gold medal mentioned above. The obverse of these coins shows a female figure, whose posture, dress and positions of the hand and half-opened lotus held in the right hand are almost the same as those of the deity on the gold piece.[64] This suggests the identify of the goddess on the Azes pieces with the city-goddess of Puśkalāvatī, viz. Ambā. There is another group of coins which refers to deities and on them appears a female having almost identical iconographic features. The fore-part of a lion is delineated by her side.[65] Firstly, it appeared to B. N. Puri that this goddess Nānā was Durgā because on one coin of Spalrises the name NANAIĀ is associated with a lion. Again on a type of coin of Huviṣka, she is portrayed as holding a sword at waist and a sceptre and patera. B. N. Puri[66] discussed the matter with D. R. Bhandarkar to whom this interpretation was not acceptable for the simple reason that Nānā or Nanaiā and Dnrgā do not have any correspondence in sound. Bhandarkar, however, referred to the word Nānā in the Vedic Sanskrit lexicon. There the word means a mother e.g. in the *Ṛg-Veda* we have a verse *Kāru rahaṁ tato bhiṣagupala Prakṣiṇī nanā* meaning a bard am I, my father is a physician, my mother a grinder on corn.

Now in the *Ṛg-Veda*, there is another word expressing the sense of mother namely Ambā or Ambitāmā. Thus the goddess Ambā or Ambitāmā was a Mother-Goddess in the *Ṛg-veda*. Her association with Rudra is clear from a reference in the *Vājasaneyī Saṁhita*, where she is mentioned as the sister of Rudra.[67] The mythological association of goddess Ambikā with Śiva has, however, varied at different periods. In the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, Ambikā is mentioned as the sister of Śiva. But in later periods, Ambikā is mentioned in a different relation to Śiva. In the *Amarakośa* there is a *sloka* :

Śivā-Bhavānī-Rūdrāṇī Sarvāṇī Sarvamaṅgalā,
Arpaṇā-Pārvotī-Durgā Mṛdāṇī-Chanḍikāmbikā.

The position of Ambika is further explained as *Ambikā-Pārvatī-Mātro-Dhṛtarāṣṭrasya-mātarī*. Here she is taken in three senses viz. as the name of Pārvatī, as mother and as mother of Dhṛtarāṣṭra. In this case her relation with Śiva would be that of wife. However, the mythological conception developed itself later on, her original association with Rudra as sister and Ambā of the world (i.e., the Mother-Goddess remains incontrovertible and seems to have continued right upto the time of Huviṣka because as mentioned, Nānā (Ambā) is associated with OHPO=Umeśa=husband of Umā. Further, as already pointed out by Bhandarkar, Umā occurs on a coin of the Kuṣāṇa sovereign showing clearly that Umā and Nānā did not come to be identified till his time.[69] Thus it is perfectly clear that in the Vedic Sanskrit language the meaning of Nānā was mother and this was also applicable to Ambā or Ambitāmā and, therefore, goddess Nānā was none else than the goddess Ambā, who is mentioned as the Mother-Goddess in the *Ṛg-veda*, and whose association with Rudra in whatever capacity it may be, is elear from the Vedic literature.

A question which now arises is whether the iconographic conception of NĀNĀ as indicated on the coins can be identified with the iconographic conception of Ambikā. According to Hindu iconography, Ambikā is seated upon a lion and has three eyes. She has in one left hand a *mirror*. Her right hand is held in *Varada* pose. In the other two hands, she holds the sword and the shield.[70] We have already seen that on one coin of spalirises, Nanaiā appears along with a lion and the name of the goddess alone shows that before the Kuṣāṇas, she was represented with the *vāhana*, which came to be closely associated with her in later times. B. N. Mukherjee also supports the point by saying that lion association of Nānā probably began to influence the iconography of Ambā by the end of the period of Azes I or II, who ruled from about the middle of the 1st Century B. C. to about the end of the first quarter of the 1st Century A. D.[71] Our investigation into the Nānā-Ambā cult will be incomplete unless we take into account what figure the goddess had in the west. In this connection the following remarks of Jastrow are very important. "The oldest cult of the mother goddess, so far as our material goes, appears indeed to have been in Uruk, where she is shown as Nānā but we may be quite sure that the cult was never limited to one place. The special place, which Nānā has in the old Babylonian pantheon, is probably due to the peculiar development taken by the chief deity at that centre, Anu, who became an abstraction, the God of Heaven as presiding over the upper realm of the universe. Her temple at Uruk is known as Eanna the heavenly house and revealing the association of the goddess with Anu as a solar deity became one of the most famous in Euphrates valley."[72] It is in connection with the cult of NĀNĀ that we learn of a phase of the worship of the mother goddess, which degenerates into the obscure right that calls for the amazement of Herodotus, as the Mother Goddess Nānā or Ishtar is not only the source of fertility displayed by the earth and the kind gracious mother of the mankind but also the goddess of love, the Aphrodite of Babylonia. The process of the conception

and growth of embryo in the mother's womb is full of mystery and it was probably this mystery which gave rise to the rites in connection with the worship of Mother Goddess in the early period. This rite symbolised the fruition through union with the male-element. This view expressed by Jastrow fits most excellently in the case of Nānā-Ambā cult of India. In this country she was associated with Rudra, who, in the Kuṣāṇa period became known as *OHPO=Umeśa*. Here also the worship of Mother Goddess has degenerated into obscure rights. She does not only appear as the goddess of fertility but also as Bhavānī, the wife of the god of procreation.[73]

Mukherjee goes on adding that the figural representation of Nānā in its turn-felt the impact of the city goddess Tyche by the time of the Kuṣāṇa king Kaniṣka. One of the causes of such impact was perhaps the association of the Mother-Goddess Ishtar or NĀNĀ with the city deity as well as Mother Goddess Ambā or rather Ambā-Tyche.

That Nānā-Ambā had indebtedness to Tyche (as the goddess of fortune) in respect of the iconographic representation becomes certain when we examine the Candragupta—Kumāradevī type of coins issued by Candragupta I.[74] The reverse of these pieces depicts a female figure with a nimbus and wearing a long loose robe, seated on a lion couchant to either left or right. She holds a fillet in her outstretched right hand and a cornucopiae by the left. Her feet rest on a lotus. The lady on lion can be easily identified as Nānā-Ambā. But lotus also appears under her feet and as her attribute which is essentially Indian. The portraiture of cornucopiae instead of a sceptre is remarkable in this connection. A study of the Indo-Greek coins would drive home the point that cornucopiae was an attribute of Tyche, who is created as the goddess of plenty and fortune. Some Parthian coins also display a cornucopiae. As her name (Tuxa meaning fortune) suggests, she was considered as the goddess of fortune and was identified indeed with the Roman Fortuna, who was aiso depicted in art carrying a cornucopiae. Pausanias categorically stated that Tyche held in her hand what the Greeks called Cornucopiae (i.e. the horns of plenty). "The horn of plenty of Cornucopiae was indeed a fitting emblem of the goddess of fortune. The same attribute may be noticed on an unpublished intaglio seal, found somewhere in north-western part of the Indian subcontinent and now preserved in the collection of Professor S. K. Saraswati of Calcutta. It shows a female figure to left. She wears a chiton reaching down to her feet, and has a polos head-dress. In her left hand, she holds a cornucopiae. Stalks of two lotuses are held by her right hand."[75]

"The presence of polos as well as the horn of plenty distinguish her from Tyche, the goddess of fortune. On the other hand, the lotuses held by a female in Greek attire remind us of Ambā, the tutelary head of Puṣkalāvatī or the lotus city, as depicted on the British museum gold medal mentioned above. This female figure on S. K. Saraswati's intaglio can indeed, be identified as Ambā Tyche of Puṣkalāvatī if we consider that some square copper coins of Indo-Greek ruler, Philoxenus, which bear on the reverse Śiva's mount bull,

show on the obverse a lady, wearing chiton and polo head-dress, as holding a cornucopiae in her left hand and stalk of a half opened lotus in her right hand."

"It was the character of Ambā as a city divinity which led her to borrow the turreted crown of Tyche, the city goddess. The association of the city-deity cum Mother Goddess with Tyche, the city-goddess resulted in the imbibing of Ambā of another trait of Tyche's character revealed as the goddess of fortune. It is also possible that Tyche as conceived in the north-western part of the Indian sub-continent, was influenced by Ambā through her city goddess aspect. The concept of a female divinity combining in herself the traits of Ambā, the city-deity and Mother Goddess and of Tyche, the city-goddess and the goddess of fortune appears to have emerged as a result of cross thinking among the people of the east and the west."

As it has been described above, a device on some of Huviṣka's coins shows Nānā by the side of Oesho, i.e., Śiva, apparently in place of Ommo, i.e., Umā alias Ambā, portrayed along with the same male deity on some other pieces of that King.[76] It has also been suggested that this alludes to an association or fusion of the concepts of Nānā and Ambā as Mother Goddess. Nānā, on the first of these two groups of coins, holds a cornucopiae, the emblem of Tyche, whereas Umā (Ambā) has a lotus (also held by the deity of Puṣkalāvatī) on the second group of species. It seems that Nānā has a cornucopiae in place of Umā's lotus. And there was a fusion of one aspect of one deity with that of other goddess. Nānā might have received the horn of plenty from Tyche and through the concept of Umā (Ambā) as the divinity in charge of fortune. If such a hypothesis is acceptable, Ambā and also Nānā began to be regarded as goddeses of fortune by the time of Huviṣka. It should, however, be admitted that the horn of plenty was not confined only to Tyche. It was associated also with several other divinities including the Greek goddess Demeter. Her icons in stone and her representation on coins show her as holding a cornucopiae. As a goddess of corn and giver of plenty she was akin to Ishtar, the mistress of field and vegetation and the bestower of man.

It was during the Kuṣāṇa and the post Kuṣāṇa periods that the concept of Nānā-Ambā was undergoing the change to the concept of Durgā (Śakti) seated on lion i.e., Durgā Siṁhavāhinī. The figure had become completely Indianised and it becomes manifest if we scrutinise the reverse devices of the coins issued by the Gupta emperors. But there are sufficient points to substantiate the view that Nānā-Ambā was no other than the consort of Śiva himself, who was the killer of evil. Ambā or Pārvatī also was Caṇḍī, a form of Śakti, which later culimated in the form of Mahiṣāsuramardinī. "Thus the device of Nānā on Lion on the Kuṣāṇa coins betrays the impact of the iconographic features of Ambā, Tyche and perhaps also Artemis. These were the results of the fusion of the concepts of Nānā & Ambā as Mother Goddess, of Ambā and Tyche as city goddess, of Ishtar (Nānā) and Artemis as protectress or goddess of beasts or as divine huntress and of the intrusion of the idea of Aphrodite as the moon goddess into concepts of Nānā (Ishtar) who was otherwise related to

the moon-God".[77] To sum up, different syncretic tendencies contributed to the growth of the concept of iconography of the goddess on lion, who became ultimately known as Durgā-Siṁhavāhinī.

Somewhere we find Nānā as a goddess holding a bow in her left hand and drawing an arrow from a quiver at her back, making it likely that she corresponds to Artemis. Artemis in Greek mythology is the moon-goddess, who is the source of fertility and love. The presence of nimbus and lunar crescent with the goddess Nanaia makes it probable that she had close association with the moon-goddess. The Kuṣāṇas might have a special liking for the presiding deity of moon, as they belonged to Ta (Great) Yue-chi (Lunar race).[78]

Skanda-Kārttikeya

The Brahmanical deity that makes his appearance next in frequency is Skanda-Kārttikeya, the god of war and generallisimo of the army of the gods. The god appears on the coins of Huviṣka in three aspects of Skanda-Kumāra, Viśākha and Mahāsena. We find the following depictions of the god :

(a) Male deity facing, nimbate and diademed, clad in coat and chlamys, holding in right hand a standard surmounted by a bird and in left hand a sword.[79] The Greek legend is '*Macaano*'. On the obverse of some of Huviṣka's coins, the king himself is represented as holding a standard surmounted by a bird.[80] The bird is most likely a peacock, the indispensable insignia of Kārttikeya.[81] The depiction of king Huviṣka himself presenting as the bearer of the standard surmounted by the bird peacock confirms the view that the king was a great devotee of Skanda-Kārttikeya, whose standard he used to take as his mark of identification and, therefore, the depiction of Kārttikeya with his attribute par-excellence spear and mount peacock is the best tribute Huviṣka could have paid to him. But certain characteristics such as the cock with a red tuft, which appears on the Yaudheya coins does not find its appearance on the Kuṣāṇa coins. It may not be unjustified to say that the figure of Skanda-Kārttikeya is not as comprehensive as on the coins of the Yaudheyas.

(b) Two male figures standing face to face, nimbate, each wearing chlamys and necklace and having sword at waist; Skanda holds in right hand, a standard surmounted by a bird, while *Viśākha* holds in left hand a spear. The Greek legend is *Skando Komaro vizago*.[82]

Skanda-Kārttikeya figures on another coin of Huviṣka[83] where we find his depiction as such, "Niche on basis, within which Skanda and Viśākha standing; between them Mahāsena horned (?) facing, nimbate, clad in chlamys sword at waist. The Greek legend is *SKANDO KOMĀRO MAACHNO BIZĀGO* (Skanda-Kumara, Mahāsena and Visakha).

D. R. Bhandarkar is of the opinion that Skanda Kumāra, Viśākha and Mahāsena represent four different gods. In support of his view he has brought forward two verses of *Amarakośa*, which in four lines, mention the four names

one after another.[84] R. G. Bhandarkar opines that the three different figures represented on Huviśka's coins have three names i.e., Skanda-Mahāsena, Skanda-Kumāra and Viśākha[85] According to him, Mahāsena and Kumāra are the alternative names of Skanda. J. N. Banerjea has reasonably suggested that Huviṣka's coins represent three aspects of the same god viz. Skanda-Kumāra, Mahāsena and Viśākha.[86] The *Mahābhārata* tells us about Skanda's several forms Śākha, Viśākha, Naigamya and his other names Kumāra and Mahāsena. There is another coin, where we find Skanda-Kārttikeya, being represented as three figures standing side by side in a temple, each nimbate. The middle figure is inscribed *MAACHNO*, that on the left *CKANDO KOMAPO* and that on the right *BIZACO*.[87] All these three names, according to Cunningham, also belong to Kārttikeya, the Indian god of war. The last name Viśākha, the divider, is given to him, as Saṅmukhi or the six faced, because he divides the year into two portions of six months each.[88] The *Mahāmāyurī* text composed within one and a half century of Huviṣka's time shows that Kārttikeya and Kumāra indicate the same deity having his famous shrine at Rohitaka. Skanda-Kārttikeya, having peacock for his vehicle, is proof of this connection as peacocks are found in the forests of which Rudra and his attendants are the lords. His being the leader of the army of the gods was an idea suggested by his being the leader of the Guṇas of Rudra.[89] Kārttikeya's association with war is established beyond dispute by his being adopted as the lord of the Yaudheyas, who were known as "*Āyudhajivin Kṣatriyas*" that is military tribe living on weapons.

The Indian war-god may be compared with the Iranian war-god. On the gold coins of Kaniṣka, the Iranian god Orlagno is depicted as wearing diadem and helmet surmounted by a bird with expanded wings and clad like the kings, holding spear in the right hand and sword in the left. The weapons held in the hands of the deity are comparable at least to one of the characteristic attributes of Skanda-Kumāra, that is his spear or *Śakti*. It may be mentioned in this connection that the sword is also represented as an attribute of Mahāsena as depicted on Huviṣka's coins. Further, the association of the bird with Orlagno as an ornament on his helmet reminds us of the standard surmounted by bird held in the hand of either Mahāsena or Skanda-Kumāra. No doubt, it shows that the sanctity of a bird in association with the warrior god was held in high esteem in popular religious beliefs both in India and Iran. Thus, we notice a tendency towards integrating Skanda-Kumāra, Mahāsena and Viśākha which is amply supported by the numismatic data available at our disposal.

Lakśmī (Pl. XXVIIa)

Lakṣmī does not figure very frequently on the Śaka and the Kuṣāṇa coins. She figures on a coin in the Cunningham's catelogue[90] as follows : Lakṣmı being anointed by two elephants. On the coins of the Śaka and the Kuṣāṇa kings, Lakṣmī is seen seated or standing on a lotus with two elephants standing and

besprinkling her. On the coin of the Kuṣāṇas, the figure of Lakṣmī is complete because lotus and elephant both are present. Lotus born out of water is energy-giving to life and increases production. Elephant represents the material aspect of life and, therefore, the goddess Lakṣmī is the goddess indicating the material prosperity in life. The goddess Lakṣmī with flower in her raised right hand appearing on the coins of Mathurā was later on adopted as a device on the coins of the Śaka King Azes. On the obverse of Lakṣmī and bull type of coins of Azes is depicted goddess Lakṣmī standing to front with flowers in the raised right hand.[91] Gardner has found on the same type lotus at the feet and lion by the side of the deity.[92] But he himself admits that the supposed lion, which seems to lie ūnder her left elbow, may be after all only a lump of oxide.[93] But on the basis of the supposed lion, J. N. Banerjea has suggested the identification of the deity with Durgā-Siṁhavāhinī[94], although it is admitted that the lotus at her feet and the same flower in her raised right hand would indicate the possibility of her being Lakṣmī[95] Another very important icon of Abhiṣeka-Lakṣmī is noticed on the silver coin of the Kuṣāṇa king, where we notice the Indian goddess Lakṣmī standing to front on a lotus flower, from which two stalks spring to right and left, each supporting a small elephant, which pours water on the head of the goddess.[96] Indian Lakṣmī corresponds mythologically to Greek Demeter, Roman Fortuna and Persian Ardoksho. She may also be equated to Nike, as she represents the kingly fortune (Rāja-Lakṣmī).[97] The cornucopiae is the characteristic attribute of Demeter, Fortuna, Ardoksho and also of Lakṣmī on the early Imperial Gupta coinage. The Cornucopiae, the horn of plenty, is represented in art as over-flowing with flower, fruits and corns.

However, the study of the Indian coinage would show a gradual iconic development of Lakṣmī. Her appearance as Gaja-Lakṣmī or Abhiṣeka-Lakṣmī in association with two elephants on either side in the 3rd—2nd centuries B.C. seems to have been followed by the depiction of the female deity standing without elephants but with other symbols. The lotus at her feet and in her hand was recognised as the characteristic attribute of Lakṣmī. In the mean time, foreign rulers, Greek, Scytho-Parthians and Kuṣāṇa, made an import of a new attribute of the goddess of fortune, namely cornucopiae and at the same time recognised the lotus as an attribute. Thus Lakṣmī was portrayed in Gaja Lakṣmī form on the Śaka and Kuṣāṇa coinage.

Buddha (Pl. XXIXa)

Before we discuss the origin of the Buddha image in the history of iconography, it will not be out of relevance to briefly look into the history of Buddhism. Before the rise of the Mahāyāna branch, Buddha was considered to be a great man, who was like a prophet. Hīnayāna concerned mainly with the emancipation of individual self but with the evolution of the philosophy of Buddhisattva under the Mahāyāna school of thought, no one could get salvation from the cycle of birth and death unless he helped others emancipate from

birth and death. This was the state of Arhathood. After the rise of Mahāyānism, the Buddha himself became Transcendental, to whom the people ran directly for blessings. Under the Hīnayāna sect, the Buddha was a great man and it was considered an act of impiety to portray the figure of a super-human being into a human form. The anthropomorphic representation of the Buddha was, therefore, a later development in the Buddhist iconography.

A survey of the sculptures in India will show that the Buddha began to be portrayed in human form either in the Mathurā or in the Gāndhāra school of art in the Kuṣāṇa period. In the Gāndhāra school, we find that the mourning scene of Lord Buddha has very close resemblance to the mourning scene of the Greek deity Apollo. The foreign influence on the Gāndhāra is easily traceable. But the process of Indianisation began with the Mathurā school of art, where Lord Buddha's human images were executed out of while spotted red sandstone. This school of art was flourishing under the patronage of the Kuṣāṇas. Lord Buddha was portrayed with thirtytwo marks e g. *Urṇā*, *Uṣṇīsa*, long ears, broad chest, long hands, *Jālāṅgulihasta*, etc. Similarly, the mint-masters during the Kuṣāṇa period did not lag behind in depicting the Buddha in human form on coins. Coomaraswamy strongly advocated the origin of the Buddha image in the Kuṣāṇa period and its earliest representation on the coins of illustrious Kaniṣka. But to the contrary, W. W. Tarn has found the figure of the Buddha on a coin of the Śaka king Maues. Whitehead thinks that the Buddha's representation in human form is found on the coins of the Kuṣāṇa king Kujula-Kadphises.

Long ago Longworth Dames[98] suggested the probability of the representation of the Buddha on a coin of Maues.[99] He observes, "A close examination of the plates and three specimens in my possession fails to confirm the presence of a sword, the horizontal line to the right probably being part of the seat. The attitude of the figure seems to justify its identification as a seated Buddha, very like the seated Buddha on Kaniṣka's coins." Incidentally we may reproduce the description of the type on which the seated Buddha has been traced by some. The type is called the 'elephant and king'. The coins of this type are of copper and square in shape. On the obverse in found "in square frame elephant with wreath in uplifted trunk running to right and on reverse is depicted in square frame king to front seated cross-legged on raised cushion".[100] Some numismatists have found the king holding a sword or mace on his knees. But Tarn[101] has advanced the following arguments to show that the representation of the seated king on the coins of Maues is actually that of the Buddha.

(a) The so-called sword or mace is in reality the back of Buddha's throne;

(b) The figure is not seated on a cushion, which would go down in the middle and up at the ends, if a man were seating on it;

(c) The elephant on the obverse of the coins is supposed to be doing reverence to the seated figure;

(d) The fact that the figure is placed on the reverse should alone be conclusive that it cannot represent the king.

Sir John Marshall has refuted the arguments in the following way :[102]

(a) The so-called back of the Buddha's throne is manifestly in the same way as the one depicted on an analogus coin of Azes.[103] The weapon appears to represent a short sword partly unsheathed, with the scabbard to the proper left of the figure, the hilt of the sword to his right and the thin line of blade itself visible in front of the body.

(b) As regards the cushion, it is said that on the coins of Azes the cushion on which the king is seated is far more convex in shape than it is on the coins of Maues.

(c) The motif of an elephant offering flower etc. to the Buddha was common enough in early Indian sculpture but it would not be repugnant to the Indian idea for the elephant to take place of Nike in offering wreath to the king.

(d) In placing his own figure on the reverse, Maues followed the precedent set by Antimachus II Nikephoros, who appears on horse back on the reverse of his silver issues, with Nike holding a palm or wreath on the obverse.[104] Antimachus Nikephoros ruled in Gāndhāra and it was in Gāndhāra that Maues issued this particular type of coins.

The elephant with wreath, instead of Nike with wreath, on the obverse of the coins of Maues seems to have been copied from a similar type on the reverse of the square copper coins of Antialkidas, the diademed bust of the king being depicted on the obverse.[105] It seems that the figure of the seated king on the reverse of the coins of Maues cannot be reasonably identified with that of the seated figure of the Buddha.

R. B. Whitehead has found on the obverse of the coins of Kujula Kadphises the Buddha seated in conventional attitude, and on the reverse a deity, probably Zeus wearing the diadem standing to right, with his right arm extended and a long sceptre in the left hand.[106] Vincent Smith has also supported the identification of the seated Buddha on the coins of Kadphises.[107] He found the seated Buddha occupying one side and the other bearing Śiva-and-bull design in case of two specimens of this type having the legend Khosānsu. On the third specimen, Smith found the Buddha on one side and a king or deity, instead of Śiva with bull, on the other side. Whitehead has identified the figure as Zeus; but according to Smith, it represented a king or god. However, on the strength of these specimens, Smith has concluded that the introduction of the image of the Buddha, in its conventional form, does not date from the reign of Kaniṣka but goes back at least to the reign of Kadphises, one of his predecessors. But arguments have been put forward against the views of Whitehead and Smith. It is pointed out that the conical knobbed cap is not the attribute of the Buddha and the weapon in the raised right hand is not the

characteristic feature of the Buddha. But in fact the said figure of the seated Buddha is found to wear a conical head-dress with a knob at the top and seems to hold a weapon in the raised right hand. It is difficult to regard the figure in question as that of the Buddha on the following grounds :

(a) According to Whitehead, while the Buddha is represented on the obverse, Zeus occupies the reverse. According to Smith, the Buddha occupies one side, the other side bearing Śiva-and-bull design. It seems rather unusual that the king should not be represented on any side of the coin; and the same coin should show the Buddha and Śiva on its two sides. Following the numismatic convention, the king, who is the issuing authority, should have a place either on the obverse or on the reverse. He is generally placed on the obverse of the coins, the deity being represented on the reverse.

(b) The representations of the deities on both the sides of the coin is rare in the numismatic usage of the Kuṣāṇas.

(c) The seated figure with the raised arm represented on the reverse of the Kadphises coins closely follows the design on the obverse of the seated king and Zeus type of coins discovered by Marshall in Taxila.[108]

(d) The representation of the seated king on the reverse is not unknown. The coins of Maues and Azes referred to show the king seated cross-legged on some specimens issued by them.

(e) It was not Kadphises I but Kaniṣka, who is traditionally regarded as the patron of Buddhism. It was in the Fourth Buddhist Council convened by Kaniṣka that the Mahāyāna Buddhism had an official recognition. Till the growth of Mahāyānism, the worship of the Buddha in human figure was awaited. The objections raised by B. Chattopadhyay[109] against the identification of the icons on the coins of Maues and Kadphises I with that of Lord Buddha holds good. The last logic is specially helpful. The most popular, however, endorses the view of B. Chattopadhyay that the Buddha was depicted on the gold and copper coins of Kaniṣka for the first time in anthropomorphic shape. The Buddha has been represented in the following ways :

(1) The Buddha standing to front, with nimbus, clad in long robes to mid leg; carrying alms-bowl in left hand; right hand advanced to front, as if in the act of blessing.[110]

(2) The Buddha standing, facing, nimbate; his right hand raised in explaining or preaching attitude; in left hand wallet.[111]

(3) The Buddha seated, with left hand in lap and right hand raised in the attitude of blessing.[112]

(4) The Buddha seated on pediment, with both the hands raised in front of breast.[113] Greek legend incomplete, on left CAKA on right N. ...boy. The iconographic features of the Buddha represented an Kaniṣka's coins are really interesting. Firstly the postures attract our attention. On some coins, the Buddha is found standing to front and on other he is found seated, when

his right hand is advanced to front possibly in the act of blessing. The *Vyākhyānamudrā* is one of the commonest gestures which is observed in the Brāhmaṇical, the Buddhist and the Jaina iconography. It stands for an assurance of fearlessness, tranquility and protection given by the deity to his worshipper.[114] On some coins, the standing Buddha makes the gestures of explaining or preaching (*Vyākhyāna mudrā*). On a well-preserved gold stater in the British Museum,[115] the Buddha is seated, his right hand on his breast making the posture of argument (*Vitarka mudrā*) and his left hand holding the bottle of ambrosia (amṛta). On some specimens, the seated Buddha is represented with both his hands joined together upon his breast. This posture is called that of instruction (dharma-cakra mudrā), the two hands seeming to turn the wheel of law. The posture in which Lord Buddha is represented as seated cross-legged on a sort of throne is known as Mahārājāsana.

The sculptures display the dress of the Buddha very prominently. It comprises of three pieces, viz. the lower garment (*antaravāsaka*) which hangs down to the ankles and gathered round the loins with a gridle, the upper garment (*uttarnsaṇga*) which covers the breast and shoulders and a lower garment which hangs down to the feet. This is of course more clearly shown in case of the standing Buddha.

In the Buddhist art, some conventional marks and signs are generally adopted to characterise the figure of the Buddha. His head is surmounted by *Uṣṇisa* and the *Urnā* between the eyebrows. These are supposed to be the marks of Bodhi (perfect knowledge) which belong to the Buddha only. But on the coins, it is difficult to distinguish these features.

The entire figure of the Buddha is enveloped by an aureole (*Prabhāmaṅḍala*) on the gold piece in the British Museum. On other specimens, the Buddha is depicted with a nimbus round his head. In the iconographic texts the nimbus is known as *Śīrṣacakra*, which is associated with the divine figures. The nimbus is a circle round the head, while the aureole is a larger halo round the whole of the divine body. Grunwedel remarks about the halo round the Buddha head in Gāndhāra that the nimbus is borrowed from the Greek School.[116] M. E. Drouin also thinks that the nimbus and the aureole, which surround the body and the head of the Buddha, are of Hellenic origin, since there exist no figured representations of the Buddha before Kaniṣka.[117] But Coomaraswamy has observed that the nimbus found with the Buddhas of of Mathurā and Gāndhāra can be traced in the Vedic ritualistic golden disc-placed on the altar to represent the sun. In his opinion, every element essential to the iconography of the Buddha and the Bodhisattva figures in early Indian art before the origin of the Buddha figure of Gāndhara and Mathurā was known.[118] The technicians and artists, according to B. Chattopadhyay, may have originally derived the seated cross-legged figure of the Buddha from the Mahāraja Cakravartin. Thus we find that the Kuṣāṇa mint-masters were successful to a great extent in portraying the Buddha figure in the anthropomorphic form

with all the marks or *lakṣanas* of the Bodhisattva, which revolutionised the Buddhist iconography.

On the Greek gold and silver coins of Bactria and India and on the Śaka-Pahlava silver and copper coins of India appear deities from Greek mythology, e.g. Apollo, Artemis, Athena (Pallas), Demeter, Dioskuroi, Hekate, Helios, Herakles, Nike, Poseidon, Zeus, etc. Greek copper coins bear the figures of Dionysos and some unidentified deities. The Greek divinities introduced as coin devices by the Indo-Greek rulers were later on imitated by the Śaka-Pahlava rulers and also the Kuṣāṇas. On the coins of Maues, we find representations of Apollo, Artemis, Herakles, Nike, Poseidon and Zeus. The coins of Azes show Demeter, Herakles, Hephaistos, Hermes, Nike, Pallas, Poseidon and Zeus. On the joint issues of Vonones are represented Herakles, Pallas and Zeus. While on the coins of Spalahores, we find only Herakles, the coins of Spalirises bear only the figure of Zeus. On the coins of Gondophares are represented Nike, Pallas and Zeus. On the coins of the successors of Gondophares, like Abdagases and Pakores, only Nike and Zeus have made their appearance. On the Kuṣāṇa coins, we find representations of Herakles, Helios, Hephaistos, Salene, Uranus and Zeus, etc.

The study of the coin types of the Scytho Parthians and the Kuṣāṇas indicates no doubt that the choice was gradually being limited to some divinities of Greek Pantheon. While the coins issued by the Scytho-Parthian kings shows a tendency of adopting Indian coin devices and Hindu deities, the Hindu, Persian and the Greek deities are found to occur on the Kuṣāṇa coinage as the devices. The enthusiasm towards portraying the Greek divinities on the Kuṣāṇa coins thus decreased considerably. Whatever that might be, the representations of the Greek divinities on the coins put in circulation in India had no doubt an impact not only on the numismatic art but also the religious thinking of India.[119]

Artemis (Pls. XXVb, XXVIa)

On the obverse of the coins of the Śaka king Maues is "Artemis radiate to right; with veil floating round her head". On the reverse of these coins is found a humped bull.[120] The attributes held by Artemis incidentally happen to be the same as those found to be held by goddess Nānā appearing on the reverse of the coins of the Kuṣāṇa king Huviṣka. The goddess Nānā is represented with nimbus and crescent to right, holding a bow in the left hand and drawing an arrow with the right hand from a quiver at her back. Again on the reverse of the gold coins of Huviṣka is found the figure of a female deity standing to right, clad in long chiton and himation, holding in the left hand a bow and drawing an arrow from quiver with the right hand.[121] The legend in Greek found with the figure of the deity is variously read as Zero or Teiro. Zero is identified with Zahr, the Persian name of Venus who is the Roman counterpart of Greek Artemis. A. Stein is of opinion that the reading

Teiro is more appropriate and the deity is to be identified with the Persian deity Tishtraya, the star Sirius, whose later name Tir in Pahlavi and Persian actually means an arrow. It is suggested by Stein that Greek Artemis was a ready type at hand for an Indo-Scythian die-cutter desiring to exhibit the characteristic emblems of the deities bow and arrow.[122] But it seems to us, observes Chattopadhyay, that the reading Zero proposed by Thomas and Cunningham is more acceptable, keeping in view the attributes of the deity as well as the nomenclature corresponding Persian Zahr. On the reverse of a gold coin issued by Huviṣka,[123] we find Artemis standing towards right, clad in long chiton and himation, holding in left hand bow and with right hand drawing an arrow from the quiver. The Scytho-Parthian coinage indicates a tendency on behalf of the mintmasters to imitate the Greek coinages blindly and deviate from Hellinistic models by introducing some innovations. The local Indian influence was made use of by the Śakas in their attempt to introduce innovations. Gardner has described the coin-devices of the Śakas as original barbaro Hellenic figures. The appearance of the Indian gods and goddesses side by side with the Greek divinities on the Śaka-Pahlava coinage presents before us an interesting school of art, which might have developed under the royal patronage. The cultural contact between India and western countries led to the development of a school of art which is incidentally recorded in the numismatic art of this period. The admixture of the Iranian, Hellenic and Indian style was more and more patronised under the rule of the Kuṣāṇas.

The exchange of ideas on art and aesthetics helped India's religious life to have close contact with the mythological ideas and ideals that came here from outside. It may be assumed that India at that period had an opportunity to compare and contrast her own ideas on mythology with those of Greece and Persia. The scope of studying comparative mythology through the numismatic art would lead us to assume a fundamental unity of various religious ideas that originated with the Nature worship of the Indo-Europeans.

Pallas : (Pls. XXVa, XXVIa, XXVIIa, XXVIIIa)

Among the Śaka rulers, it was Azes I who adopted Pallas Athena as reverse type of his coins. On the reverse of his coins, Pallas is found to left with aegis and thunderbolt.[124] Again Pallas is found standing to left with shield on left side and right arm outstretched.[125] Pallas is found standing with the right arm outstretched with shield and spear on left side.[126] On some coins Pallas is represented as crowning herself with her right hand, with a shield on her left arm and a spear at her back.[127] On joint issues of Azes and Azilises, we find Pallas hurling thunderbolt to left. On the reverse of the coins of Azilises is represented "Pallas to left, hurling thunderbolt with aegis on the left arm."[128] Again on the joint-issues of Vonones and Spalahores Pallas is found standing to left with a shield and a spear.[129] On the reverse of the coins of the Parthian king. Pallas makes her appearance. On some coins, the deity is found standing to right with the right arm advanced and a spear and a

shield on the left arm.[130] Again, on the reverse of other coins, Pallas is represented to right with aegis and thunderbolt.[131] Pallas with aegis and thunderbolt appears on the reverse of the coins attributed to Rajuvula, a Satrap of Mathurā.[132] On the reverse of the coins of the Kuṣāṇa king Huviṣka is found the figure of Roma, city goddess of Rome, like Athena, the city-goddess of Athens, standing to right, wearing helmet and long chiton, holding spear and shield. The Greek legend found with Roma is Riom.[133] In the temples of Rome, Roma, who is the city-goddess of Rome, has been depicted as clad in long robe and with a helmet in the sitting posture, This strongly resembles the figure of Greek Athena.

Herakles : (Pls. XXVIa, XXVIIa-b, XXVIIIb, XXIXb)

Herakles is another deity in the Greek religious history, whose figures occur on the obverse and reverse of the coins of the Indo-Greek, the Indo-Scythian and the Kuṣāṇa rulers.

On the obverse of the coins of the Śaka king Azes I appears Herakles standing to front with a club and lion's skin in his left hand and a wreath in his right hand with which he is crowning himself.[134] Again on the reverse of the coins of the same ruler, Herakles is depicted in square frame seated to left on rock with club resting on knee.[135] The reverse of the coins of Azes shows in square frame Herakles standing to front with club and lion's skin in his left hand and crowning himself with a wreath by his right hand.[136] On the reverse of the coins of Azilises, Herakles with diadem appears in square frame, seated on a rock, with a club resting on his knee.[137] The deity is naked also. Again Herakles is found standing to front on the obverse of the coins of the same ruler with diadem in right hand and club and lion's skin in the left hand. On the obverse of the joint issues of Vonones with Spalahores and of Vonones with Spalagadames, Herakles appears standing to front crowning himself with his right hand and with a club and lion's skin in his left hand.[138] On the reverse of the joint issues of Spalyrises with Spalagadames is depicted naked Herakles, diademed, seated on rock, supporting a club on his knee.[139]

On the reverse of some copper coins of the Kuṣāṇa ruler Kujula Kadphises, Herakles is depicted standing to front with his right hand resting on club and lion's skin over his left arm.[140] On the reverse of the copper coins of Huviṣka, Herakles appears to right with a club in his right hand and his left hand raised to head as if to crown himself.[141] On the reverse of a gold coin[142] and some copper coins of Huviṣka, the deity is depicted as a bearded male figure, standing to front with a club and lion's skin.[143]

But on a coin[144] we find a bearded male figure, standing naked to front holding in his right hand a club and in the left hand and apple with lion's skin hanging over his left arm. What does after all the apple in the left hand of Herakles mean ? And why ? The appearance of Herakles as naked in a good number of cases presents a riddle on which the scholars have not thrown any light.

Poseidon : (Pls. XXVb, XXVIb, XXVIIa-b)

Poseidon is a prominent deity in the Greek pantheon. It figures on the coins of the Indo-Greek, the Indo-Scythian and the Kuṣāṇa rulers.

On the obverse of square copper coins of Maues appears the figure of Poseidon standing to front, with a long trident in his left hand and his right foot resting on a small radiate figure underneath him, the right hand being on the knee.[145] On the obverse of this type of coins is found a female figure, standing to front between trees, who is identified with a Bacchante among Vines. On the other coins of the same type issued by Maues, Poseidon is depicted as hurling thunderbolt with his right hand towards a small figure. On the reverse of some round silver coins of Azes I is depicted Poseidon holding a long trident standing to right with the right arm outstretched.[146] The obverse of square copper coins issued by Azes I again depicts Poseidon as standing to front with a long trident in his left hand and his right foot on the shoulder of a small figure to left, his right hand resting on his knee.[147]

From the numismatic evidence, we may further analyse the character of the Greek god Poseidon. While the Indo-Greek coins demonstrate the trident and palm-branch as the characteristic attributes of Poseidon, the coins issued by the Śaka rulers depict Poseidon, as not only holding but hurling a thunderbolt like Zeus. Besides, on some coins of Maues we find representation of Bacchante in the midst of vines on the reverse of the type representing Poseidon on the obverse. Bacchante is closely associated with the cult of Dionysos, who was originally the god of wine and pleasures. It seems that the cult of Dionysos made its advent in India simultaneously with that of Poseidon. A Homeric hymn of Dionysos consists entirely of the narrative of his introduction to a sea-faring folk of the west It is, therefore, not at all surprising that this god entered into certain affiliations with god Śiva.[148] Again it is interesting to note the presence of a small figure under the right foot or Poseidon, standing grasping his trident. The composition naturally reminds us of Śiva who, in Indian composition, is found trampling on Apsamāra Puruṣa.[149]

On the reverse of some round billion coins of Gondophares appears the figure of the god facing, holding trident in the right hand and palm in the left.[150] Although the figure of the god is depicted without his mount bull, he is identified with the Indian god Śiva. In support of this it may be pointed out that on the reverse of some gold coins of Wema-Kadphises, the standing figure of Śiva is depicted without bull.[151] Further, the epithet '*Devabrata*' applied to Gondophares on most of his coins may be significant. The palm-branch may be supposed to be a Greek insignia.[152] But on the reverse of the coins of Kaniṣka, we find 'Śiva' holding wreath in one of his hands. The association of god Śiva with the world of vegetation is often recognised. The thunderbolt, which is found to be held by Poseidon on the coins of Maues, is also held in one of the hands of the four-armed Śiva depicted on the reverse of the coins of Kaniṣka and Huviṣka.[153] It has already been pointed out that

the small figure under the foot of Poseidon found on some coins of Maues closely resembles the crouching figure of Apsamāra Puruṣa on the shoulders of which stands the two-armed figure of Śiva in high-relief carved in the front part of the shaft of the Gudimallam Linga.[154] Taking all these into consideration, we may reasonably assume that the iconographic features of Greek Poseidon influenced to a great extent those of Indian Śiva in the post-Christian period.[155]

Zeus : (Pls. XXVb, XXVIa-b, XXVIIIa)

Zeus appears either standing or enthroned on both the obverse and the reverse of the coins struck by the Śaka king of India. On the obverse of the coins of Maues, the god is found standing, carrying a long sceptre, with his right arm outstretched.[156] Again on the reverse of the coins of the same king appears the deity standing holding a long sceptre with Nike on his outstretched right hand.[157] Enthroned Zeus is sometimes depicted on the obverse of Maues' coins holding a long sceptre in the left hand, with the right hand extended to a small radiate deity to left.[158] The standing Zeus type of Maues' coins is adopted by his successor Azes. But the standing deity is found to hold sceptre in his left hand, brandishing or holding thunderbolt by the right hand.[159] Again, standing Zeus Nikephores (i.e. with Nike on his outstreched right hand) appears on the reverse of a large number of coins struck by Azes.[160] Although standing Zeus type is normally found on the reverse of his coins, in some cases its occurrence on the obverse is also noticed.[161] Standing Zeus with the right arm outstretched and a long sceptre in the left hand appears on the reverse of some silver coins of Azilises,[162] while on others is depicted standing Zeus Nikephoros.[163] Again enthronded Zeus-Nikephoros is also depicted on the obverse of some coins of Azilises.[164] On the reverse of the joint issues of Vonones and Spalahores, standing Zeus is found radiate, leaning on a long sceptre in the left hand, with the thunderbolt in the right hand.[165] The same type occurs again on the reverse of the coins struck jointly by Vonones and Spalagadames, Spalirises and Azes and Spalirises as king's brother.[166] On the reverse of the coins issued by Spalirises as king, we find Zeus radiate on throne, with a long sceptre in the left hand and the right arm extended.[167] The standing Zeus type with a long sceptre in the left hand and the right arm extended often appears on the reverse of the coin of the Indo-Parthian ruler Gondophares.[168] Standing Zeus-Nikephoros again appears on the reverse of some coins of the same ruler.[169] These two types were later on initiated by Abdagases.[170]

On some copper coins of the Kuṣāṇas discovered in Taxila, the standing Zeus type is found depicted.[171] On the reverse of the coins of Kujula Kadphises is represented standing diademed Zeus with the right arm extended and a long sceptre in the left hand.[172] On the reverse of the coins of Soter Megas, bilingual and copper, standing Zeus appears with the right arm ourstretched and a long sceptre in the left hand,[173] while in some cases the deity is found to hold thunderbolt in the right haed.[174]

Helios

Helios is conspicuous by his absence on the Scytho-Parthian coins; but he makes his appearance on the reverse of the gold and copper coins attributed to the Kuṣāṇa king Kaniṣka.[175] figure of the deity with a rayed halo round the head stands in long tunic with the right hand extended, as if pointing to some object and the left hand resting on the hip. The association of the bow bristling with arrow with the Greek sun-god is indicative of the fact that the sun god is shooting at darkness. In Indian sculptures, we have numerous examples of female figures with bow and arrow depicted beside Sūrya, who is probably shooting the sheet of darkness. But in the later stage of development in the iconography of Sūrya in India, we find lotus in his association. It is known that lotus blossoms fully with the rise of the sun and starts fading with the setting of the sun and hence the association. But in the Greek representation of the sun, we, however, do not find any such things.

Salene

Salene is regarded in the Greek mythology as the goddess of moon, the sister of Helios.[176] It is significant to note the conspicuous absence of the goddess on the Indo-Greek coinage. The lunar goddess, however, appears on the obverse of some coins of the Śaka king Maues "with long sceptre standing to front between two star like ornaments [177] But Salene is represented on the reverse of the gold coins of the Kuṣāṇa king Kaniṣka as "a male god standing to left diademed, clad in chiton and himation, crescent behind shoulders, right hand advanced, holds in left hand long sceptre bound with fillet, sword girt round waist".[178] The figure of the lunar deity is represented exactly in the same attitude as that of Helios, the sun-god. But instead of a rayed halo it has a crescent behind the shoulders, The crescent has been associated with the human figure of the moon-gon in Indian literature also.

Salene was represented on the pedestal of the throne of Zeus at Olympia as riding a horse or a mule. In later times, Salene was identified with Artemis and the worship of the two became amalgamated[179]

In works of art, the two divinities are usually distinguished, the face of Salene being more full and round, her figure less tall and always clothed in long robe and her veil forms an arch above the head over which there is a crescent.[180] In the Greek mythology, Salene is called a daughter of Hyperion and Thea and accordingly a sister of Helios. Homer describes Salene as a beautiful goddess and Aeshcylus calls her the eye of night. She rose like her brother Helios, across the heaven in a chariot drawn by two horses, cows or mules.[181] It is difficult to explain why the moon-goddess Salene is represented as a male-god on the Kuṣāṇa coinage.[182] It seems, however, that such representation was due to the amalgamation of the type of Helios with that of Salene in the die-cutter's art.[183]

In the Vedic mythology, a male god represents the moon, who is referred to in some hymns as Soma. Soma appears to have been used in both

Senses, as god of the intoxicating juice, and of the moon ruling through the night.[184] That close relation existed between the moon-god and the sun-god is incidentally confirmed when the birth of the moon from the sun is recognised. The importance of the moon in early times as giving the means of measuring time is insisted upon and even the connection of the fish with the fertility is traced to the apparent connection of shape between fish and the sickle shaped crescent.[185] In later times, Candra came to be regarded as one of the guardians of eight quarters (*lokpalas*).

Mao (Pl. XXIXa)

On the reverse of some gold and copper coins of Kaniṣka and Huviṣka, Mao is depicted in various forms with different attributes. On the coins of Kaniṣka, Mao is found as a male deity, diademed, clad in chiton and himation, with crescent behind the shoulders, the right hand advanced and the left hand holding a sceptre and a sword round waist.[186] On the coins of Huviṣka, we find Mao as a male deity with crescent behind the shoulders, holding a sceptre in the left hand and callipers in the right hand.[187] The same deity is also depicted on some coins as holding sword in the left hand and wreath in the right hand, with crescent behind the shoulders.[188] On some coins the deity is depicted with the crescent, a sceptre in the left hand, a sword by his side and right hand extended.[189] On some coins the deity figures as diademed, holding wreath in the right hand and sceptre in the left hand.[190] It is interesting to find the deity on some specimens of Huviṣka as radiate with crescent behind shoulders, the right arm outstretched and a knobbed staff with fillet in the left hand.[191] On the reverse of Huviṣka's gold coins Mao is depicted jointly with Mihira. While Mao is represented as a bearded deity to right, diademed, with crescent behind the shoulders, a sceptre bound with fillet in the right hand and an elephant goad in the left hand; Mihira is found to left radiate, the right hand advanced and a sceptre bound with fillet in the left hand.[192] Obviously the identification of the deities is made with the aid of the Greek legends *MAO* and *MIIRO* found along with them. On the copper coins of Huviṣka, we find the Greek legend *MAO* with a female deity standing to left, nimbate, holding cornucopiae in both the hands.[193]

Mao is the nominative of the Zend form of Mas. The root *Ma*, means to measure and the nominative form in sanskrit is also *Mas*. It indicates the role of a measurer of time played by Mao. Greek Salene also is described as the measurer of time. The callipers, which are held in the hands of the moon-god, again indicate his role as the measurer of time. He is identified with the Iranian moon-god Mah.[194] In the Avestan literature his worship as the deity Mah finds expression in the *Mah Yasht*.[195] It has been said that all the immortal benefactors (arch-angels) rise and spread the moonlight over the surface of the earth created by Ahurmazda, then the light of the moon shines through the tops of the golden coloured trees and gold like it rises from the earth (i.e., it is reflected by her).[196]

Significantly enough, the iconographic attributes of Mao closely resemble

those of Salene, the Greek Moon-god represented on the gold coins of Kaniṣka as diademed, clad in chiton and himation, with crescent behind the shoulders, a sword girt round his waist, a long sceptre bound with fillet in his left hand and his right hand advanced.[197] The iconographic resemblance makes it clear that the Hellenistic art style was employed by the Kuṣāṇa ruler to represent the Iranian god.[198] Again the representation of the Iranian Moon-god as a female deity holding cornucopiae seems to suggest the iconic influence of the Western Asian lunar deities, who are most often female.[199]

In the Assyrian-Babylonian mythology, the moon is represented by Sin who was an old man with long beard. In the astral triad, the two other members Shamash, the sun, and Ishtar, the planet venus, were the children of Sin.[200] Ishtar is represented as the goddess of morning and the goddess of the evening.[201] However, without indulging in speculation, as is rightly observed by B. Chattopadhyay. it may be reasonably suggested that the representation of Mao as a female divinity was due to an unintentional confusion on the part of the technicians responsible for the manufacture of the die of these coins. In Indian mythology, Soma identified with Candra is represented as one of the Aṣṭa Dikpālas. This deity is regarded as the god presiding over the north.[202] In the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*, Soma (Candra) is depicted as the monarch of the stars and the planets.[203] Therefore, there was least chance of assuming the moon-god as a female deity in the Kuṣāṇa period that had inherited Greek, Iranian and Indian culture.

Manaobago

The moon-god appears on the gold coins of Kaniṣka and Huviṣka with the legend *Manaobago.* On the coins of Kaniṣka appears a four-armed male deity enthroned, to front, with crescent behind his shoulders, a sceptre and a calliper in two hands and his feet on a foot-stool [204] On the coins of Huviṣka is a four-armed male deity seated on the throne, wearing helmet, with crescent behind the shoulders, a sceptre, a wreath and fire held in three hands the fourth hand resting on the hip and the feet on the foot-stool.[205]

Manao is derived from the root *Man* meaning to measure. Bago may stand for sanskrit '*Bhāga*' meaning the attributes of the god viz., splendour, beauty, glory, etc. Therefore, Manaobago is to be regarded as the god of measure. In this has been recognised the trace of '*Vohumanah*' that is good mind, which, according to the Iranian mythology, was produced by Ahurmazda as the first step in the cosmogonic process.[206] The god is believed to pervade the whole living good creation and the good thoughts, words and deeds of men are wrought by him.[207] It is said that the first revelation came to Zoraster from Vohumanah, the spirit of wisdom, who conferred on him esstasy in the presence of Ahurmazda on the bank of Daiti (Azerbaijan).[208] It appears, therefore, that Manaobago was originally an ethical and abstract principle, which has been given an anthropomorphic form.

Cunningham once pointed out that one of the objects held by the four-

armed deity on the coins of Huviṣka is to be regarded as a circle surrounded by twelve dots, which might typify the twelve months of the year as well as the twelve signs of the Zodiac[209] This suggestion is reasonable enough in view of the fact that the moon-god was recognised as the measurer of time. In India, Candra is not only regarded as the guardian of the north but also as one of the Navagrahas, who occupied a very important place in the religious life of the Indians. In the early times, the importance of the moon was insisted upon because of his role as the measurer of time. The growth of astrology popularised the spread of the cult of planets and their representations are fairly numerous.

Although the moon is in usual cases regarded as the emblem of Śiva (known as Śaśāṅkaśekhara) in Indian iconography, the moon (Candra) figures independently as one of the Navagrahas. Basement relief nos. 60 and 61 at Pahārpur on the main ground, which have been sought to be identified as Candra and Bṛhaspati are of unique iconographic interest. These were formerly identified as Śiva and Brahmā respectively.[210] However, it seems that Manaobago depicted as the four-armed deity, bears resemblance to the Indian moon-god Soma (Candra) and thus establishes the heritage of a common tradition. The four-armed character of the deity particularly suggests the Indian iconographic influence upon it.[211]

Demeter (Pl. XXVIIa-b)

The goddess Demeter appears on the obverse of the coins issued by the Śaka king Azes I, as seated on throne, with her right arm extended and the left hand holding cornucopiae.[212] Sometimes Demeter appears on the reverse of the copper coins of Azes I with cornucopiae standing to left.[213] In another type of the coins of Azes appears Demeter standing to front, with the right arm extended and cornucopiae in the left hand.[214]

Nike (Pl. XXVb, XXVIa-b, XXVIIIa)

On the reverse of the silver and the copper coins of the Śaka King Hermaues, we often find winged Nike to right or to left with wreath and palm.[215] On a rare coin of Maues is found Zeus-Nikephoros, that is, Zeus with Nike on the outstretched right hand.[216] Similar representations of Nike are found on some silver coins of Azes I,[217] Again winged Nike facing to right with palm and wreath is depicted on the reverse of the silver coins of Azes I.[218] An unidentified goddess with palm in her left hand and flames on the right hand is noticed on the coins of Azes I and also on the joint issues of Azes and Azilises.[219] Zeus-Nikephoros appears on the coins of Azilises.[220] A goddess with palm, not yet identified, appears on some coins of Azilises.[221] Zeus-Nikephoros appears on the coins of the Parthian king Gondophares.[222] Winged Nike facing to right holding wreath and palm also appears on the copper coins of the Parthian king.[223] Zeus Nikephoros and winged Nike with wreath and palm appear separately on the coins of Abdagases.[224] On the joint issues of Orthagnes and Gondophares appears winged Nike with her

attributes palm and wreath.[225] The traditional representation of the goddess is to be found on the coins of Pakores.[226] Nike is conspicuous by her absence from the coins of the Kuṣāṇas.[227] The goddess Nike had close relation with Zeus, Athena and Herakles and this appears to be very significant.

Hephaistos (Pl. XXIXa)

Hephaistos is not portrayed on the Indo-Greek coinage but is found depicted rarely on the Indo-Scythian and the Kuṣāṇa coins. The deity is represented on the obverse of the copper coins issued by Azes I and Azilises as "standing to front, sceptre in right, tongs and hammer in left hand."[228] On some gold coins of Kaniṣka, the deity is depicted as a bearded figure standing with tongs, the left hand on the hip and the right hand holding wreath.[229]

The name of Hephaistos in the Greek means the "quivering flames" and hance he is unequivocally the god of fire in the epics of Homer. He is represented as the son of Zeus and Here. He has the distinction of being the only craftsman of the gods and incomparable worker in metals.[230] The artists consistently represented Hephaistos as a smith holding a hammer, although many statues of the sixth century grossly portrayed his lameness. He is regarded as a counterpart of the Roman god vulcanus.[231]

In the Vedic mythology, the fire-god Agni is one of the most prominent deities. But the functions of Hephaistos, as described in the Greek mythology, are not the same which are discharged by the Vedic god Agni. Hephaistos may be rightly compared to Tvastṛ or Viśvakarmān, who is the architect and workman of the gods. While Hephaistos is said to have built the houses of the gods and wrought the aegis of Zeus, the sceptre of Agammenon and the armour of Diomedis and Achilles, Viśvakarmān is known to have built the heavenly palaces, sharpened the iron-axes of god Agni and forged the thunderbolt of Indra.[232] The god Tvastṛ is mentioned some sixtyfive times in the *Ṛg-veda*, most often in the late first and tenth books.

Serapis

On the reverse of the gold coins of the Kuṣāṇa king Huviṣka, the god Serapis is depicted as standing to left, diademed and clad in himation, holding sceptre in his left hand and with his right hand advanced.[233] On some coins, the god is found seated on throne; with modius on the head, having a sceptre in his left hand and a noose in the right hand.[234]

It has been suggested that Serapis was originally an Egyptian divinity whose worship was introduced in Greece in the time of Ptolemies.[235] It is said that Serapis presided over the invisible world.[236] A statue of Serapis is used to bear on his head a measuring vessel and in the hand a cubit or measuring rod for fathoming the depth of the Nile.[237] On consideration of his attitude Serapis is supposed to be the counterpart of Pluto, the Greek god who was the sovereign of the infernal region.[238] The cult of Isis and Serapis

penetrated into Italy by way of Sicily and the south of the Peninsula. The Egyptian gods, who never lost their character, remained for long popular in Rome. At the end of the fourth century, there were still processions in honour of Isis.[239] B. Chattopadhyay rightly says that it is reasonable to assume that the concept of Serapis was derived by the Kuṣāṇas from Rome in course of brisk Indo-Roman trade and commerce.

Keeping in view the character of Serapis as the god of the dead, we may draw a comparison of the deity with Indian Yama. The Cidambaram figure of Yama shows the two armed god standing erect in front of his mount (buffalo) his right hand holding a noose and the left one resting on a club.[240] The portrayal of buffalo as the mount of the Cidambaram figure and noose as an attribute leaves hardly any doubt in identifying him as Yama, the god of death. The buffalo has been described in Indian literatures and mythology as the *Vāhana* of Yamarāja very frequently. The numismatic representation of the god Serapis shows a noose in his hand. It is no wonder that an Egyptian god migrated to India in Roman garb and later on came under Indian influence.

Uranus

On the reverse of the Kuṣāṇa king Huviṣka's gold coins, we find a male deity to left, bearded and nimbate, bearing modius (water vessel) on his head with his right hand advanced and a sceptre in the left hand. The Greek legend "Uron" seems to reveal the name of the deity, who is identified with Greek Uranus.[241]

A study of the Greek mythology would indicate that Uranus who is the most ancient god being the son and husband of Gaea, had the credit of producing the first race on the earth. He is supposed to be the star-lit sky who approaches Gaea (earth), being accompained by night.[242] This conception of earth and sky as the two primordial divinities is common to all Indo-European peoples.[243]

Most of the coins depict Uranus with modius on his head. Modius is water and this association of Uranus indicates that he appeared in the role of the god of waters like Varuṇa in Indian religion. The water vessel, therefore, lends weight to the theory that Uranus may have been conceived of as the god of water. In the *Viṣṇudharmottara*,[244] Varuṇa is called the god of waters. The association of the god with water is revealed by his characteristic mount Swan. Of course, the actual sculptures show the two-armed god either standing or seated, not on a swan, but on a *makara*. But the characteristic attribute of Varuṇa is found to be the noose in all extent sculptures.[145] In the *Ṛg-veda*, Varuṇa is closely associated with Mitra. They make the sun cross the sky, the rain fall and send the dawn. It is said that the earth and sky are held apart by the laws of Varuṇa. By his ordinance the moon moves at night and the stars shine. Further, it is said that the Mitra produces the day. Varuṇa the night. Needless to say that Varuṇa, who is associated with the nocturnal sky, closely resembles conceptually the Greek *Manus*. In the

Yajuraveda and the *Atharva-veda* his connection with waters has been established.[246]

Ahurmazda

On some gold coins of Kaniṣka, Ahurmazda is represented as a male figure riding a horse with two heads.[247] Again on two coins of Huviṣka, the god is represented as a bearded male figure, nimbate standing to left and holding an upright sceptre in the left hand and a circular wreath in the outstretched right hand.[248] While on the coins of Kaniṣka the legend in Greek is *MAZDOHANO* (a form of Mazdao), on Huviṣka's coins the Greek legend is woromozdo (a form of ormazod), both signifying Ahurmazda, the supreme god of Iranian religion.[249]

Darmesteter has aptly said that Ahurmazda is no more different from Varuṇa than Zeus is from Jupiter.[250] It is presumed that Zoroaster, while reforming the Iranian religion, changed the name of the chief Asura god Varuṇa into Ahurmazda. Ahura, an Iranian term, is connected with Asura and Assyrian Ashur.[251] Mazda seems to be related to Sanskrit '*Medhā*', that is wisdom. It may have some connection with Mastim that is illumination. Some scholars compare the Iranian term Ahurmazda with Assaramazaas, god of Ashurbanipal (668-626 B.C.), creator and chief among the gods. However, Mazda, who is pre-eminently the god of the Achaemenian king Master of the Heaven and creator of all creatures was described as a reflection of the king of the kings, master and ruler of all people. In the opinion of A. Cunningham the name Mazdohano is the same as the Avestan Mazdaonho. Mazdaonho is the plural of Mazdao. Ormazd himself is simply the Ahura, who is called Mazdao, the author of Mazdean religion.[252]

Ahurmazda is supposed to be the creator of '*Asha*' that is the universal law. The celestial personages, who composed his retinue, species of Archangel, were abstractions made complete. The two primeval principles of good and evil were united in Ahurmazda himself, the beneficent spirit being called spenta Mainayus and the hurtful spirit Angro Mainyus.[253] In the Yasna,[254] these two spirits are called the two creators but they were not separate beings but spirit inherent in his own nature. The two headed horse, which Mazdohona rides may be intended to typify the two spirits of good and evil, which were inherent in one supreme creator Ormazd. He is also said to be the father of Amesha—Spentas and of the powerful goddess Ashivanguhi, whose mother was Spenta Armaiti or the earth.

In the *Avestan*, Ahurmazda has been painted pre-eminently as an ethical figure, who fills the heaven with light and observes all things with his shining eyes. In this respect, he closely resembles *Ṛg-vedic* Varuṇa.[255] The ic nographic features of Ahurmazda depicted on the coins of Huviṣka resemble to some extent those of "OAXPO" or a unique coin of Huviṣka himself.[256]

Ardaviksho

On some gold coins of the Kuṣāṇa King Huviṣka is depicted the figure

of a god, radiate, standing to left with a sword, his left hand placed on the hip and the right hand extended.[257] The name of the deity as found in the Greek legend is compared with the Avestic name '*Ashavahista*' which becomes Ardavahishta in the later Zoroastrian literature.[258] Ardviksho is looked upon by some scholars as an impersonation of sunlight.[259] In the *Ardavahishta Yasht*,[260] Ahurmazda requests Zarthustra to protect and promote Ardavasishta (Ardavahishta), the best righteousness by praising, invoking, inviting to sacrificial meals, worshipping, singing, etc., in order to keep up the splendour of light of the luminaries, which is indispensable for the growth of good creation.

Ardavahishta may be compared with Savitṛ of the *Ṛg-veda*. While Sūrya represents the concrete aspect of the sun, Savitṛ, the stimulator and instigator seems to denote the sun as the motive power, which drives men to action.[261]

The Savitṛ verse[262] occurs immediately after an invocation of the god Pūṣan. A close connection between the two deities may be sought to be established. However, it seems that Ardaviksho represents, like Savitṛ and Pūṣan, some aspects of the solar deities, although the god cannot be equated with the sun-god Mithra or Mihira who is a counterpart of the Vedic god Sūrya.

On some gold coins of Huviṣka, there appears the figure of a deity, nimbate and radiate, with the right hand advanced and the left hand resting on a buckled sword. The Greek legend is read as *Onia* or *Aino*.[263] It is worthy of note that the representation of Ardaviksho closely resembles that of Onia and, thus, it may be suggested that the latter also represented like the former an aspect of the sun-god. Asavashista is supposed to be the perfection of order, '*Asha*' being equated to the Vedic *Ṛta*, the original form of the '*dharma*' or the law. In the Iranian mythology, Ardviksho is regarded as one of the benign immortal spirits, who are under the supreme command of Ahurmazda. From this point of view, the deity may be regarded as an abstract and ethical divinity who is to be distinguished from the Nature god associated with the Sun in the Vedic literature. However, the portraiture of Ardviksho on coins establishes beyond dispute his close relationship with the sun-god. Further, it may be pointed out that on the reverse of the coins of both Kaniṣka and Huviṣka, we find the representation of Mihira, the Iranian sun-god, whose iconographic attributes are closely similar to those of Ardaviksha and Onia.[264]

Mihira (Pl. XXIXa)

The reverse of the gold coins of Kaniṣka depicts the figure of a male deity, standing to left with the Greek legend '*Meiro*'. The deity is diademed, with radiate disc, his right hand advanced and holding in the left hand a sceptre bound with a fillet and a sword girt round the waist. On some specimens, the Greek legend is '*Meiro*' and the right hand of the deity is advanced

the left hand resting on hip and the sword as usual being girt round the waist.[265] On copper coins of Kaniṣka, we find variations of the Greek legend *Mioro, Mirro.*

On these specimens the deity is found standing to left, diademed, with radiate disc, clad as king, the right hand advanced and a sword in the left hand.[266] On the reverse of the gold coins of Huviṣka, the god Mihira with variant Greek legends is depicted with various attributes. The deity is found to left, nimbate holding a wreath and a sceptre with sword at the waist.[267] Mihira is also depicted as a radiate, standing figure with Callipers in the right hand and a sword by his side.[268] The Callipers held in the right or left hand of the sun-god Mihira probably indicate that like Mao and Manaobago, the sun-god also was considered as the measurer of time. On some specimens, the deity is found holding a wreath and a sword[269] and on others a spear and a sword, a sceptre in the left hand with the right hand advanced and a sword in the left hand with the right hand advanced.[270] On copper coins of Huviṣka, Mihira is depscted with different spellings in the Greek legend, as standing to left, radiate, with the right hand extended and the left hand grasping either a sword or a sceptre.[271]

The *Mihira Yashṭ* of the *Avestan* contains an invocation offered to the angel presiding over and directing the course of the sun.[272] Mihira is the Sanskritised form of the Pahlavi Mihr, which is a corruption of Mithra, the Avestic form of the Vedic Mitra.[273]

The representation of Mihira has close iconographic similarities with the standing figure of Helios on the Greek and the Kuṣāṇa coins. It is significant to not that on the coins of the Kuṣāṇas, the familiar attributes of the sun-god like the Chariot or the horses are not found to occur with the figure of Mihira, as they are depicted with Helios on the coins of the Bactrian Greek king. Plato. Besides, the solar, Chariot and horses are common in the Buddhist sculptures of the Kuṣāṇa period.[274] There is least doubt that Ahurmazda, the supreme divinity in the Zoroastrian pantheon does not enjoy the dominant position in the symbolism of the Kuṣāṇa coinage. The tendency to extend greater recognition to the deities, who represented various natural phenomena can be easily traced. This indicates that the Kuṣāṇa were averse to the ethical and abstract deities and they felt inclined towards nature gods and goddesses. The Iranian Mihira or Mithra seems to be more akin to the Vedic Mithra. Mithra always associated with Varuṇa makes the sun cross the sky, the rain fall and send the dawn.[275] So also the Iranian Mithra, associated with Ahurmazda, is represented as the god of sunlight, without being the sun itself. In a bas-relief, a typical representation of Mihtra sacrificing the bull is associated with the torch-bearers on either side representing the rising and setting sun respectively over whom are depicted the sun and the moon in their chariots.[276] He is in one passage called a bull as well as a bird and in another a mottled bull.[277] The attributes like a sceptre or a sword held in the hands of Mihira on the Kuṣāṇa coins are justified, when the killing of the

primeval or is ascribed to him. In the Zoroastrian mythology the divine bull by its great generative power and sacrificial death is believed to have promoted the fertility to vegetable and animal life.[278] The images of the sun-god from Mathura are represented in Central Asian contume, comprising tunic, trousers and high heavy boots,[279] resembling the images of a Kuṣāṇa king, now preserved in the Mathurā Museum.[280] In this connection the appearance of the sun-god on the coins of Philoxenus as radiate clad in chiton and boots, may be recalled.[281] But on the Kuṣāṇa coins, Mihira is not found in central Asian costumes with boots. So he may be distinguished from the sun-god with Chariot and horses so often available in the sculptures of the Mathurā school and also from the sun-god often appearing with the characteristic '*Udichya Veśa*'.

Athso

On the reverse of Kaniṣka's gold coins, Athso stands as a bearded deity to left, diademed, clad in chiton and himation, holding a wreath in his right hand and tongs in the left, which rests on the hip.[282] The same deity is represented on the reverse of Kaniṣka's copper coins.[283] On the reverse of Huviṣka's gold coins is found the deity to right, with flames rising from shoulder carrying a hammer and tongs in the left hand.[284] Again on the reverse of Huviṣka's copper coins, the deity is found with a wreath in the right hand and tongs in the left hand.[285] The attributes of Hephaistos (who is regarded as the Greek god of fire ?) represented on some gold coins of Kaniṣka are similar to those of Athso. But it may be mentioned that Hephaistos has been successfully identified with Indian Viśvakarmā, the architect of the deities and not the fire-god on the basis of superficially represented attributes. The figure of Athso has, however, been identified on the basis of the accompanying Greek legend. On some coins, the Greek legend with the same deity appears to be '*Loe*' which has been connected with the Greek '*Luke*' and sanskrit '*luk*' signifying light.[286] Loe again may have been connected with *Lohita* signifying the red colour of fire, or with *loha*, that is iron manufactured into useful goods through fire.

Athso derives his origin from Zend Athr, the weak form of Atar, which means fire and therefore, it is identical with Pahlavi 'Atro' and Persian 'Adhar' that is fire.[287] In the Iranian mythology, 'Atar' is the son of Ahurmazda, playing a significant role in the Zoroastrian cult. He is frequentl addressed in the hymns and prayer of the Avestic rituals. In a passage o the Vendidad,[288] the tongs are mentioned as required for the proper care o Ormazd's fire. The myth of 'Atar' thus seems to be an expression of the cul of fire—the fire of the sky as well as the fire which resides in the wood. But Atar is much more than the element of fire. He is the bringer of comfort, noble offspring upon men and the mankind receives from him the wherewithal to live wisdom and virility. Athso reserves paradise for the virtuous people. He is said to have accompanied the sun's chariot and he defends the world against all the evils.[289]

The iconographic features of Athso may be further analysed to find out his distinction from the Greek Hephaistos. Although like the Greek god of fire, he is found to be holding tongs in his hands, in some cases, Smith's hammer is also found along with the tongs in the hands of the deity. Further, in the depiction of Athso on some coins of Huviṣka, flames of fire are found to rise from his shoulders. In view of this, it may be reasonably held that while the Greek Hephaistos was primarily the counterpart of the Vedic Tvastṛ or Viśvakarmān, Athso seems to be primarily the god of fire (Agni) along with the functions of manufacturing, which is symbolised by the hammer and the tongs.[290]

It is interesting to note some similarity between the Iranian and the Vedic beliefs in regard to the origin of fire. In the *Vedas*, it has been regularly said that Agni dwells in plants. Agni is also born from waters on high that is the clouds. In this respect he has become practically Apām Napāt.[291] Thirdly it is stated that Agni has his birth in the heaven. The *Aitereya Brāhmaṇa*[292] calls him at once heavenly and in the waters. In a *Yasht* (XIX. 47.51), Atar is described as the child of waters. Like Athso, the Vedic Agni is depicted as the destroyer of demons. The domestic fire of the Vedic Āryans was supposed to be the protector and leader of the people. He was also regarded as an energy between the gods and the men. Although in the *Avestan* the name of Agni is unknown as such, the worship of fire itself seems to be strongly marked in the period of the unity of the Indo-Iranians.[293]

It seems that the attributes of Athso in his numismatic representation were derived from the Greek Hephaistos as depicted in the Graeco-Roman sculptures. But flames issuing from the shoulders of the deity may reasonably remind us of the epic description of the god Agni as having seven red tongs. with smoke for his standard and headgear.[294] The Pahārpur basement figure of Agni shows the two-armed god standing, holding a rosary, a water-vessel in his two-hands with flames issuing forth from his sides.[295] The flaming shoulders recall an image of the Kuṣāṇa period from Mathurā.[296] It may be assumed that the "king sacrificing at an altar" type was the symbolical representation of a Zoroastrian or Mazdean theme, as it is found to have resemblance with a similar motif in a bas-relief of the Parthian period upon a boulder near the Darius relief at Bisutun.[297] The Kuṣāṇas were settled on the south of river Oxus for more than a century before their arrival in India proper and as such they had several opportunities to have close contact with the Iranians. This will explain to a great extent the introduction and penetration of Iranian elements in the religious beliefs of the Kuṣāṇas. This is based on evidences furnished by Hou-Han-Shu. It may be held that the introduction of the fire worship by the Kuṣāṇas in India in the early centuries of the Christian era re-inforced ancient Indo-Iranian beliefs.

The Buddhist carvings of Gāndhāra represent on the pedestal burnt firing.[298] It has been very reasonably suggested that the motif on the Kuṣāṇa

coins even if inspired by the Parthian symbolism was entirely compatible with the Indian customs. The various Iranian religions maintained the basic and primitive cult of fire, with the result that light and purity have enjoyed incomparable prestige in all that bears the mark of Iranianism.[299] In the ritual of Brāhmaṇism all that concerns the use of fire obviously arises from the same Āryan belief.[300] The three forms of Agni originating from heaven, earth and waters are worshipped on three altars the Gārhapatya, the Ahavaṇiya and the Dakṣina in the Vedic literature.[301] Agni is regarded as an essential element in the transmission of the sacrifice to the gods, who cannot enjoy it without him.[302] The god is magnified by being declared to be above Varuṇa. Mitra and the Maruts and the gods worship him He is said to have delivered the gods in battle, defeated the Dasyus for the Āryans, vanquished the Panis and is even called the breaker of the foe and vṛta slayer. When Agni is produced in the morning at Agnihotra, he has special function of strengthening the sun.[303] In addition to these general attributes of the fire god, it may be recalled that in ancient times, the Indian kings performed Vājapeya, Aśvamedha, and Rājasūya sacrifices in order to establish their unrivalled political supremacy. From this point of view, the Kuṣāṇa motif may have been motivated to justify their claims to the status of Mahārāja-rājādhirāja Devaputra.

Pharro Pl. (XXIXb)

The Greek legend Pharro is found to be associated with the figure of a male deity on the reverse of the coins struck by Kaniṣka. On a series of Kaniṣka's gold coins, the male deity appears as standing to right, diademed and nimbate, clad in chiton and himation, holding a spear in the left hand and fire (mountain ?) in the right.[304] In some cases, Pharro, the fire god, holds a sword at his side.[305] The same deity is also represented in various forms and with different attributes on the gold coins of Kaniṣka. The deity is depicted to left, head winged, clad in coat and chlamys, holding fire (grain-seed according to Cunningham), grasping sword in the left hand, with a sword at his waist.[306] This type has a number of varieties. The deity diademed is shown with flames rising from his shoulders on some coins.[307] Again the deity is shown with nimbus, his right hand advanced and the left hand holding a sceptre with a sword at the waist.[308] The deity appears as nimbate holding fire and a sceptre but with no sword at his waist.[309] Again the deity is depicted nimbate, holding purse and caduceus or purse and a long sceptre.[310] The deity is also found on a number of coins as nimbate holding a sceptre and an elephant-goad.[311]

Pharro derives his origin from the Persian 'Farr', which probably signifies fire. On this ground Pharro may be identified with the Iranian fire god. While, according to Gardner, the deity appears on some coins holding fire in his right hand, the attribute has been interpreted by Cunningham as some 'sprouts of corn'. Cunningham has proposed the identification of Pharro with the Indian rain god, 'Pārajanya' who is the begetter of corns.[312] On some coins, the deity is found to have held a purse in his hand, according to

Gardner. But Cunningham interprets it as a bag full of corn-seeds. A gem was claimed to have been possessed on which were engraved the figures of Pharro and Ardoksho side by side. Pharro in that case is found to wear the winged head-dress with a dish of sprouting corns, while Ardoksho carries cornucopiae.[313]

Prof. Hoffmann has identified with the mighty kingly glory, 'the Kavaem Quareno' of the Avestan.[314] As already indicated, Pharro is derived from Farr, which again corresponds to Ferna, the phonetic equivalent of Zend "Quareno" The sceptre held in the hands of Pharro on some coins of Huviṣka is symbolical of the mighty kingly glory. In the *Zamyad Yasht* occurs the invocation to the mighty glory (Quarens-Ferna; Persian farr=Pharro) which was peculiar to Kavis, that is the chiefs of the Iranian communities in ancient time flourishing before Zoroaster. Ahurmazda is said to have produced it at the time of creating all that is good, bright and shining.[315] This mighty kingly glory became attached with the heroes of the past by itself like Thraetaona and Yima and this attachment of mighty kingly glory enabled them to attain great feats. This heavenly glory is said to have been essential for causing resurrection of the dead at the final end of creation. There are numerous legends indicative of the importance of glory which have gathered round the Farr-i Kayan in later Persian tradition.

Cunningham's analysis of the attributes of Pharro had led him to identify the deity with the Indian Pārajanya. Chattopadhyay suggests, "He seems to have overemphasized the sprouts of corn held in the hand of Pharro on some coins".[316] Of course the fire flames and sprouts of corn may be confused. Even if we leave aside this point, it is difficult to ignore the fire flames from the shoulders of the deity on some coins. On some coins of Huviṣka, the deity stands on fire, holding fire in his right hand and a sceptre in the left.[317] We may not afford to overlook the element of fire, which was likely to have been associated with the mighty kingly glory of ancient Iranian tradition. However, the representation of Pharro with a vessel of flames and a purse of wealth in his hands is intended to reflect the glory and wealth of kingship. This deity has the iconographic affinities with both Orlagno the god of victory and Athso, the god of fire. In the sculptures of Gāndhāra, the figure of Pharro may be traced in the Buddhist Kuvera (Vaisravana) who is represented with the goddess of abundance similar to Ardoksho.

Ardoksho (Pl. XXIXa-b)

On the reverse of Kaniṣka's gold coins Ardoksho is depicted as a female figure standing to right, having modius and nimbus, clad in chiton and himation, and holding cornucopiae.[318] On some coins the goddess is found enthroned, nimbate, with a foot stool under her foot, holding wreath and cornucopiae. In some cases the enthroned goddess is found holding flower in her right hand and a wheat stem in the left.[319] On gold coins of Huviṣka, Ardoksho appears as a draped female figure standing to right, holding

cornucopiae with both the hands.[320] Some coins of Huviṣka depict Ardoksho as a female deity to left, nimbate holding wreath and cornucopiae.[321] On Vāsudeva's copper coins Ardoksho is shown as goddess on throne holding a fillet in her right hand and cornucopiae in the left hand.[322]

Ardoksho of the Kuṣāṇa coinage corresponds to the Greek Demeter. Demeter is described as the corn mother often found on the coins of the Greek and the Scythian rulers.[323] The Iranian goddess seems to represent the female angel 'Ashish Vānguhi,' which means good truth. In the Iranian mythology, she has been introduced as the daughter of Ahurmazda and sister of Amesha Spentas or arch-angels. The *Ashi Yasht* is devoted to the praise Ashish Vānguhi or Ashishang.[324] It is due to her that wisdom is an unfailing attitude of prophets. The cornucopiae, which is associated with Ardoksho, is an indispensable insignia for the goddess of fortune and splendour. Cornucopiae, as has been said earlier, means the horn of plenty or abundance. The ancient sages and heroes, Yima, Thraetona. Zarthustra, Kava Vishtaspa etc. worshipped her, and to all she bestowed whatever they wanted, viz. wealth, victory and children. Thus, it appears that Ardoksho or Ashishang was the Iranian goddess of fortune, corresponding to the Indian Śrī Lakṣmī or Roman Tyche.

The *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* contains a description of the attributes of the goddess Śrī Lakṣmī which have striking similarities with those of the Iranian goddess Ashishang. It is said that Śrī was begotten by Prajāpati. Agni, Soma, Varuṇa, Mitra, Indra, Bṛhaspati, Savitṛ, Pūṣan, Sarasvatī and Tvastṛ took from her food, kingdom, universal sovereignty, noble rank, power, holy lustre, dominion, wealth, prosperity and beautiful forms respectively. Afterwards, she had everything restored to her.[325]

The representation of Śrī-Lakṣmī in Indian art since earliest times indicates her association with the lotus. She is portrayed either standing or seated on lotus and holding a lotus in her hand. This is evident from the sculptures of the goddess found at Bhārhut, Śāñcī, Bodh-Gayā, Beśnagar and Amrāvatī.[326] But the cornucopiae which seems to be the symbol of abundance and prosperity is hardly found to be an attribute of the Indian goddess of fortune. However, this particular attribute of Ardoksho was later on adopted on the Gupta coinage on which Lakṣmī is often and variously represented. Of course it may be pointed out in this connection that the cornucopiae was a characteristic attribute of the Roman goddess of Fortune.[327] It is known that India had developed commercial contact with Rome during the reign period of the Kuṣāṇas and this led to the import of Roman element in the depiction of the Iranian goddess of fortune, who was originally an abstract and ethical deity standing for good truth. The Kuṣāṇas were prompted to introduce Roman element in their coin devices most probably to commemorate their close commercial relationship with the Romans.

Oado (Vāta) (Pl. XXIXa-b)

The Greek legend *Oado* is found on the reverse of some copper coins of Kaniṣka along with the figure of a deity running to left, his hair loose, holding in both the hands the ends of the garments which float around him.[328] The same deity with the same attributes and the Greek legend is depicted on the reverse of Huviṣka's copper coins.[329]

The Greek Oado seems to be the rendering of the Sanskrit 'Vāta' or 'Bād' in the old Persian. The nomenclature signifies, no doubt, the wind god represented as a running figure with distended robes. The *Ram Yasht.*[330] of the *Avestan* is devoted to the angel *Rama*, who, however, is never, mentioned by this name. The expression "Vayusha Paro Kairy", that is, the wind is referred to as the angel Rāma whose business is above in the sky. He has worshipped by Ahurmazda. In the last section of the Yasht, an explanation of his name is given. 'Vayush' is traced to the root 'VI' that is to go, 'to penetrate'. Vāyūsh is also traced to the root 'Va' that is, both. Thus it is explained by the expression, "I go to both creatures, those of the beneficent and those of the malevolent spirits."

Although Stein[331] has shown that Oado is identical with the Iranian wind god, the deity may also be identified with the Vedic god Vāyu, who is invoked in the Ṛg-Vedic hymns.[332] In the *Ṛg-veda*,[333] Vāyu is distinguished from Vāta. While Vāyu, being joined with Indra, travels on his impetuous course in a car touching the sky, and generating the Maruts, Vāta, who is associated with Pārjanya (rain-cloud), is depicted as merely the wind in its power, sweeping along great clouds of dust, shattering and thundering. Vāta is less anthropomorphised than Vāyu The *Viṣṇudharmottara*[334] contains a description, which refers to the wind-god Vāyu as two armed, his two hands holding the two ends of the scarf worn by him, his garment inflated by wind, his mouth open and his hair dishevelled. This description closely follows the representation of Oado on the Kuṣāṇa coins.

Oaninda (Pl. XXIXa)

On the reverse of some gold coins of Huviṣka only we find the Greek legend *Oaninda* along with the figure of a goddess standing to left, holding wreath and trophy.[335] She makes her appearance as a winged goddess to left with palm in the left and hand and a wreath in the outstretched right hand.[336]

B. Chattopadhyay conjectures that this figure of the deity seems to be a close imitation of Nike, the Greek goddess of Victory, appearing on the coins of the Indo-Greek, the Indo Scythian and the Indo-Parthian rulers. It is not unlikely that the goddess of the Iranian origin has been represented on the Kuṣāṇa coinage anthropomorphically by the adoption of the Hellenistic art.

Stein identified Oanindo with the female spirit 'Vanainti uparatāt' that is victorious superiority, who is always associated with Verethraghna in the invocation of the Avestan.[337]

The Vanant Yasht[338] is a prayer addressed to the star Vanaint and this Vanaint most probably stands for the star of victory. F.W. Thomas suggested that Oaninda refers to Anandes, a Persian deity mentioned by Starbo. But mere resemblance of the name does not furnish with a sufficient ground for the identification, as Anandes is a male deity of whose characters and functions we know practically nothing. It is, therefore, more reasonable to accept the suggestion put forward by Hoffmann that Vanaint, who in the *Avestan* stands for the star of victory, may be identified with Oanindo represented on the Kuṣāṇa coinage.

Orlagno

The Greek legend Orlagno is found with the figure of a deity on the reverse of a series of gold coins of Kaniṣka. The deity appears as standing to right, diademed, with the helmet surmounted by an eagle, clad like a king, holding a spear in the right hand and sword in the left hand.[339] The majestic attitude of the figure, dressed like a king and armed like a general, makes itself distinctly impressive.

Orlagno, who is draped in a scythian war-dress, has been recognised as Verethraghna, the Iranian war god. The form Orlagno presents us with an old form of Pahlavi "Varaharam" which in the modern Persian is reduced to Bahram.[340]

The Bahram Yasht is devoted to the angel Bahrām.[341] Bahram seems to be a later form of Verethraghna, who was a genius of victory and may not be identified with the Indian Vṛtrāhan[342] It has been said about Verethraghna that "he gives the sources of manhood, the strength of the arms, the health of the whole body, the sturdiness of the whole body etc."[343] It is again stated that "he (Verethraghna) breaks battle hosts in pieces, cuts battle-hosts asunder, presses battle-hosts full sorely and shakes battle-hosts, with terror".[344] The bird, which is seen seated on the helmet of the deity appears to be the representation of Varaghna of the *Avestan*, who is the swiftest of all and as quick as an arrow. He is considered as one of Verethraghna's incarnations and under his shape, the kingly glory of Yima left the guilty hero and flew up to heaven.[345] The eagle like appearance of the bird, on the coins, seems to point to the close relationship between Varoghna and the Simugh (eagle) us from the *Shāhnāmāh*. The available evidences, therefore, tend to prove that Orlagno was the Iranian god of victory and royal glory. This becomes quite clear when we examine the kingly dress of the deity including diadem and helmet as well held in his hands. The deity presiding over victory is often portrayed on the Indo-Greek, the Indo-Scythian and the Indo-Parthian coins as a winged Nike. Victory seems to be purposely associated with the wings of the bird because of its impermanent nature. From this point of view, suggests Chattopadhyay, the eagle bird found with Orlagno on the Kuṣāṇa coins seems to be close to the winged Nike. The suggestion put forward by F.W. Thomas that Orlagno is to be identified with the Indian

god Agni may be based on linguistic grounds. But we do not find any ground for accepting the proposed identification of F.W. Thomas either mythclogically or iconographically. Eagle is not associated with god of fire in Indian literature. A ram is his vehicle. Flames rising from the shoulders of the male deity are the exclusive attribute of the fire god. We do not find any such thing here.

Shaoreoro

On the reverse of Huviṣkas gold coins the Greek legend *Shaoreoro* or *Shaoshoro* is found along with the figure of a male deity standing to right, with the Greek helmet and armour, holding a spear and a shield, which rests on the ground.[346] Shaoreoro is identified with the fourth among the Amesa-spentas, arch angels of the Zoroastrian creed, whose Avestic name 'Kshatra Vairya', that is perfect rule, becomes by ordinary phonetic changes Shahrevar in Pahlavi.[347] Martin Haug suggests that Ksathra Vairya (Shahrevar) presides over metals and is the giver of wealth. Possession of wealth is the simple meaning of his name. Later on it was applied to metal and money. Cunningham holds that Shahrevar is the genius of metals and the giver of wealth. He may be justifiably identified with the Indian Airavira or Kuvera.[348] Gardner supposes that Shao being detached from the Greek legend, Shao-Shoro would mean the king. The remaining part of the legend Shero or Shoro seems to be according to Gardner, a mere twisting of the name of the Greek ARES, the god of war.

If we consider the iconographic features of the god as represented on the coins, his identification with the god of war cannot be ruled out because the attributes of the god are found to be the spear and the shield. We scarcely note Greek ARES from Vase painting. At first, he was depicted as a bearded warrior wearing a helmet with a tall crest and dressed in heavy armour. Later on he appears as a young man who has retained little of the war-like attributes except the spear and the helmet.[349] This analysis, no doubt, goes in support of the identification of Shaoreoro with the Greek war god. But the explanation of the name of the deity as suggested by Gardner does not stand on solid grounds. It is more reasonable to hold that the name had been derived from Shahrevar, which was originally "Ksathra Vairya", the presiding deity of the wealth and metals. Therefore, it may be assumed that the character of the Iranian god was modified to a great extent by the Hellenistic style of representation. It is of course surprising to note that the Kuṣāṇa die-culture made a choice of the type of Ares instead of any other deity of the Greek Pantheon associated either with metals or with wealth. It is possible that the concept of a deity like Shahrevar was not available among the Greek deities, because while Hephaistos is associated with fire and metals, abundance or wealth is presided over by Demeter or Tyche. From the study of the Śaka and the Kuṣāṇa coins, it becomes clear that the Kuṣāṇa rulers,

with their advent in India from Bactria, imported some Zoroastrian deities on their coins with a view to extending due honour to the religious beliefs of a section of their subjects inhabiting the far-flung empire spread over from Balkh to Benares. The portrayal of Zoroastrian deities on the Indo Parthian and the Śaka coinage was a part of their political expediency.

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280. Coomaraswamy, *History of Indian and Indonesian Art*, Fig. 64.
281. Lahiri, *op.cit.*, Pl. XXVIII.10.

282. Gardner, P., *op.cit.*, Pl. XXVI.4.
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192. *VII*. 7. 2.
293. Keith, A.B., *op.cit.* pp. 154-62.
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295. K N. Dixit, Paharpur, *MASI* 55, p. 48, Pl. XXXII. Fig.B.
296. Smith, *Jaina Stupa at Mathura*, Pl. LXXXVIII.
297. Rosenfield, *The Dynastic Art of the Kuṣāṇas*, Fig. 129.
298. *Ibid*, Fig. 92.
299. Chattopadhyay, B., *Coins and Icons*, p 151.
300. Larousse, *op.cit.*, p. 321.
301. Hillebrandht, *Vedic Mythology*, i, 368, ii, 129 ff.
302. Keith, A.B., *op.cit.*, p. 159.
303. *Ibid*, p. 161.
304. Gardner, P., *op.cit.*, Pl. XXVI.15.
305. Smith, V.A., *IMC*, I, p. 79, Pl. XII.15.
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307. *Ibid*. Pl. XXVIII.26.
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309. Gardner, P., *op.cit.*, Pl. XXVIII.27.
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311, Gardner, P., *op.cit.*, Pl. XXVII.13.
312. *The Coins of the Indo-Scythians, Śakas and Kuṣāṇas*, p. 85.
313, *Numis. Chron.* Vol. XII, Third Series, pp. 142-33, Pl. XXI.15.
314. *Indian, Antiquary*, XVII, 1888, p. 92.
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316. Chattopadhyay, B., *Coins and Icons*, p. 168.
317. Chattopadhyay, B., *The Age of the Kuṣāṇas, A Numismatic Study*, p, 81.
318. Gardner, P., *op.cit.*, Pl. XXVI.6.
319 Chattopadhyay, B., *The Age of the Kuṣāṇas* ; p. 168.
320. Gardner, P., *op.cit.*, Pl. XXVII.10.
321. Whitehead, *PMC*, Pl. XIX.161.
322. *Ibid*, Pl. XIX, 228.
323. Spence, *Introduction to Mythology*, pp. 129-30.
324. Haug, *op.cit.*, p. 215.
325. Banerjea, J.N., *op.cit.*, p. 371.
326. *Ibid*, p. 374.
327. Larousse, *op.cit.*, p. 225.
328. Gardner, P., *op.cit.*, Pl. XXVII.6.
329. Whitehead, R.B , *op.cit.*, p. 205, Coin No. 202.
330. Haug, *op.cit.*, pp. 214-15.
331. *Indian Antiquary*, XVII, 1888. "Zoroastrian deities on Indo-Scythian Coins.
332. *The Harvard Oriental Series*, Vol. XXXI, pp. 139-40.
333. Macdonell, A.A., *op.cit.*, pp. 81-82.

334. Ch. 58, Verse 1-6.
335. Gardner, P., *op.cit.*, Pl. XXVIII.13.
336. *Ibid*, Pl. XVIII.132.
337. Yasht, 14 ; *Indian Antiquary*, XVII, 1888, pp. 92-93.
338. Haug, *op cit.*, pp. 213-14.
339. Gardner, P., *op.cit.*, Pl. XXVI.4.
340. *Indian Antiquary*, XVII, 1888, p. 92.
341. Haug. *op.cit*., pp. 213-14.
342. Larousse, *op.cit.*, p. 329.
343. Yasht, XIV, 27-33.
344. *Ibid*, 62-63.
345. *Ibid*, XIX, 35.
346. Gardner, P., *op.cit.*, Pl. XXVIII 17.
347. Hastings, *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. 1., p. 285, *Indian Antiquary*, XVII, 1888, p. 91.
348. *Numis. Chron*, XII, Third Series, p. 147.
349. Larousse, *op.cit.*, p. 137.

5

Deities and Symbols on the Gupta Coinage

The dynasty of the Imperial Gupta kings founded by Candragupta I in C. 319 A.D. witnessed India making tremendous progress in many fields including numismatics and iconography. The coinage of the Imperial Guptas, most of whom were Paramabhāgavatas, i.e., strong followers of Vaiṣṇavism, indicates that the Brahmanical deities and religious scenes were frequently portrayed. The portraiture of the Brahmanical deities was the best of tributes, which the Imperial Guptas could have paid to them as their strong devotees. The age of the Gupta kings was an age of Brahmanical religion. This conclusion is drawn from a study of the contemporary literature like the Purāṇas, the works of Kālidāsa, Fa-hien, Kāmandaka etc. which is corroborated by the portraits on their coins. But the portraiture of the Brahmanical deities on the Gupta coins should not be miscontrued to mean that they were persecutor of Buddhism or for that matter any other religion. Of course Brahmanical religion enjoyed the prime position but not at the cost of other religions. The kings of the Imperial Gupta dynasty followed the policy of the peaceful co-existence of religions which becomes clear from the fact the Nālandā Mahāvihāra, which was basically an advanced centre of Buddhist learning, was financed, patronised and encouraged by Kumāragupta I (A.D. 414-454), who was a member of the royal Gupta family. This is enough to indicate the religious tolerance of the Gupta kings. Besides, the silver coins of Skandagupta depict on their reverse the bull *Nandī*, which uptil now continued to be the theriomorphic representation of Śiva. In the region of Indian numismatics, the coinage of the Imperial Guptas occupies a place of great importance.[1] The Gupta coins constitute the earliest indigenous coinage of India, which approximates most closely to the coins as we know them in

334. Ch. 58, Verse 1-6.
335. Gardner, P., *op.cit.*, Pl. XXVIII.13.
336. *Ibid*, Pl. XVIII.132.
337. Yasht, 14 ; *Indian Antiquary*, XVII, 1888, pp. 92-93.
338. Haug, *op cit.*, pp. 213-14.
339. Gardner, P., *op.cit.*, Pl. XXVI.4.
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341. Haug. *op.cit.*, pp. 213-14.
342. Larousse, *op.cit.*, p. 329.
343. Yasht, XIV, 27-33.
344. *Ibid*, 62-63.
345. *Ibid*, XIX, 35.
346. Gardner, P., *op.cit.*, Pl. XXVIII 17.
347. Hastings, *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. 1., p. 285, *Indian Antiquary*, XVII, 1888, p. 91.
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modern terms.[2] For a few years, they showed foreign influence but very soon they became thoroughly national in their art, motif and execution.[3]

In artistic merit, variety and originality, the gold coinage of the Imperial Guptas has hardly any equal among the coinage of ancient India.[4]

Imperial Gupta gold and silver coins are marked by refinement and elegance and represent the high water-mark of the early Indian coinage.[5] Whatever the type, the size and the intrinsic value, they are always marked by clarity and elegance of design and lettering, regularity of shapes and forms and precision and refinement of execution.[6] During the long period of the rule of the Guptas, gold and silver coins were issued abundantly, which indicate the tremendous prosperity they had achieved. The coinage of the imperial Gupta kings depicts a large number of deities drawn from Brahmanical religion, and Lakṣmī is the most prominent. With the weakening of the imperial authority, however, the Gupta and Cognate coinage shows a downward grade not only in the intrinsic value but also in the artistic merit, so that towards the end of the period under review it reached a bottom from which recovery seemed well nigh impossible.[7] The tremendous economic growth of India under the aegis of the Imperial Guptas is attested to by the foreign travellers like Hiuen-Tsang, who observed that gold, silver, Tu-Shib (bronze or brass), white jade and Huo-Chu (crystal lense) were very abundant in India.[8]

He noticed the principal mineral bearing regions of the country, which comprised a belt of territory in North-western India and the upper Gaṅgā basin as well as Nepal.[9] From this account we learn that gold and silver were obtained from Bolor (little Tibet), Takka, Kuluta, Satadru (parts of Ambala, Sarhind and Ludhiana districts and Patiala state) as well as Sindh, gold from Udyāna, Darelā and Mathurā, iron from Udyāna and Takka, copper from Takka, Kultua and Nepal, Tushih from Kuluta, Mayūra city (Hardwar) and Brahmapura (Garhwal), crystal lenses from Kashmir and Kuluta, salt from Sindh, and rock crystal from Mayūra city and Brahmapura.[10] The industrial and commercial guild, which forms such a characteristic feature of the economic organisation during the earlier period,[11] continued to flourish during this age.[12] We learn that there existed organised trade and commercial activities during the reign of the Imperial Guptas and the records of the Gupta age throw some light upon the extent and objects of India's internal and foreign trade[13] during that period.

The organised commercial activities under the aegis of the Imperial Guptas in India and abroad necessitated the issue of systematic coinage which bear on both the sides the figures of deities from all sects but most of them being Brahmanical.[14] The coins indicate the religious inclination of the issuer.

The reign of the Imperial Guptas covers a wide range of period in the history of India. Though it was founded by Candragupta I, it was actually

established on solid footing by Samudragupta, who had to face a lot of difficulties in expanding the limits of the empire. However, the foundation and carving out of the empire consumed so much of Candragupta's time that he could issue only one type of coins, which was issued in all probability to commemorate the debt the Guptas owed to the Lichavīs. This was because of the marriage relationship between Candragupta I and Kumāradevī. This coin-type issued by Candragupta I is of absorbing interest iconographically.

During the reign period of Samudragupta, Candragupta II and Kumāragupta I, the Gupta empire reached the zenith of its growth in respect of trade and commerce, religious activities and coinage, etc. The purity and standard of the metal in the coins issued during the reign period of the emperors noted above are sufficient proof of the tremendous economic prosperity the empire had achieved. The bad days of the Gupta empire began with the accession of Skandagupta (A.D. 455-6 to 467) and the declining fortunes of the Gupta empire was further accentuated by the foreign invasions and internal uprisings. The coins issued during the reign period of Skandagupta are of usually debased metal and mostly belong to one type. The debasement of metal and decreasing types of coins are substantial proof of the declining fortunes of the Gupta empire, which received a crushing set-back during the times of Narasiṁhagupta Bālāditya. The history of the Gupta numismatics is basically and mainly limited up to the times of Skandagupta, up to whose times the sovereignty of the Imperial Guptas was undiminished and unchallenged and the foreign attacks and internal uprisings were successfully repulsed.

Lakṣmī : (Pls. XXXI—XXXIII, XXXIVb-c, XXXVc, XXXVIIb, Siṁhavāhini, Pls. XXX, XXXIVa, XXXVIb, feeding peaock, (Pl. XXXVIa)

Of all the deities represented on the coins issued by the Imperial Gupta kings, Lakṣmī is the most prominent. Lakṣmī is one of the most popular goddesses of the Hindus, the Buddhists and the Jainas alike.[15] She is considered to be the goddess of beauty, fortune and ferility. It is, therefore, but natural that persons desirous of attaining material prosperity should have worshipped her. Rather a special worship is enjoined in her honour in the last night of the dark half of the month of Kārttika every year when the festival of light is celebrated every year.

There seems to be a very interesting history connected with the early career of the goddess. Archaeological excavations at Harappā and Mohenjo-dāro have brought to light numerous terracotta female figurines, practically nude, save for very abbreviated skirt secured by the girdle round the loins.[16] These female figurines, wearing a quantity of jewellery and a curious fan-shaped head-dress with heavy hips and thin waists, found almost invariably in a damaged condition, have been identified to be the figure of mother-goddess, whose worship was widely prevalent in Mesopotamia and the lands of ancient Mediterranean in the 4th-3rd millenium B.C.[17] These terracotta figurines of the feminine with elaborate head-dress and ornaments strongly suggest her to be the goddess presiding over riches. An interesting seal from

Harappā represents her with a plant issuing from her womb,[18] thereby emphasizing her character as being the goddess of fertility. We see that the mother-goddess was worshipped in India from the pre-historic times, in many forms. The development of the concept of Lakṣmī finally materialised very late.

In this connection mention may be made of a large number of ring stones, varying in sizes from half an inch to four in diameter, found from Harappā and Mohen-jo-dāro, which appear to be most important objects connected with the cult of mother-goddess. These ring-stones have been regarded by Marshall[19] as representation of the female organ of generation symbolising motherhood and fertility. He further observes.[20] In these ring-stones, which are quite small and used perhaps as exvoto offerings nude figures of a goddess of fertility are significantly engraved with consummate skill and care inside the central hole, thus indicating in a manner that can hardly be mistaken the connection between them and the female principle. The statement leaves hardly any doubt that these ring-stones were intimately associated with the conception of the mother-goddess.

A gold leaf unearthed at Lauriyā Nandangarh[21] has the figure of a nude female stamped upon it. She cannot be definitely named, but she has been usually interpreted as the mother-goddess in her aspect as Mother-Earth. Bloch[22] takes her to be Vedic Earth goddess. Standing in a strictly frontal pose, She is completely nude, with her sex emphasized and also characterised by an exaggerated hip, a narrow waist and full breasts (heavy hip denoting maternity and fertility, breasts the bounty of life). She has thus unmistakable characteristics associating her with the mother-goddess of the Indus valley period. Bloch[23] has assigned the Lauriyā gold leaf figure to pre-Mauryan period, in the 8th-7th Century B.C.; it is, however, possible to regard it somewhat later. Similar figures have been found in the *stūpa* at Piprahwā in the the Basti district[24] (U.P.) of the 4th-3rd Century B.C. and at Tilpat near Delhi.[25]

Small discs, with or without central holes, have been found at Bhīr Mound in Taxila, Sānkisa, Mathurā, Kośām, Kājghāt, Basārh[26] and Patna[27] with female figures appearing on certain of the decorated pieces along with the figures of mythical animals, makaras, alligators, horses and palm-trees. These can be dated in the 3rd century B.C. or even a century or two later. Thus the Hathiāl disc[28] has four nude figures, alternating with honey-sunkles arranged in the central hole emphasizing the essential character of the goddess. The Rājghāt seal[29] has an interesting decoration consisting of a palm-tree with a horse by its side and a female figure holding a bud in her outstretched right hand followed in successive order by a long-eared and short-tailed animal, a crane, the female again, then a winged mythical animal and lastly a crane with a crab like object near its legs. Another fragmentary disc from Rājghāt[30] has two nude female figures with outstretched hands

engraved around the central hole. On the flat ends there are two monkey like creatures with a makara between them. Still another partly broken and inscribed disc from Kośām in the Bharat Kala Bhavan[31] is decorated with the nude female figures and a row of *makaras*. Stone discs from Murtaziganj[32] (Patna) belonging to the Mauryan period also bear figures of nude standing females and those of palm trees and certain animals. The nude females carved on the decorated discs resemble very closely the Lauriyā gold plaque representation. These female figures, nude and having heavy hips, have undoubted religious significance, establishing their connection with the terracotta female figuriness of the Indus Valley cities regarded as those of mother-goddess. There is a very interesting fragment of an architrave from Kauśāmbī, belonging to the Śuṅga period, now in the Allahabad Municipal Museum.[33] Beginning from the proper right, first there is the figure of an elephant tusk. Then follows the figure of a female, standing to front on a full-blown lotus in the midst of lotus buds and shrubs, and holding a lotus bud in her hand. On her either side are two elephants standing on lotus flowers with their trunks raised and anointing the female with water poured from jar held in their trunks. The female is again nude with heavy hips, narrow waists and full breasts exactly similar in treatment and features also noticed on the gold leaves and the decorated discs. The fact that such a representation of a female is depicted in close association with lotus flowers and as being anointed by a pair of elephants (in the form of Gaja-Lakṣmī) leaves hardly any doubt that goddess Lakṣmī of the historic times is no other than the Mother-goddess, whose effigies have been found on the gold leaves and the small discs of the pre-Mauryan and the Mauryan periods and who have been found widely represented in the Indus Valley as early as the 3rd millennium B C. The conclusion receives further confirmation on examining another highly interesting sculpture of great significance, belonging to the Mathurā art[34] (C. 1st-2nd Century A.D.). Housed in the Lucknow Provincial Museum, it represents a female standing gracefully on lotuses, while a rich growth of lotus plants with leaves, buds and flowers, on which a pair of peacocks is seated, sprouts from a huge water-vessel forming the pedestal of the pillar-like piece and covers the entire back of the figure. Besides wearing elaborate ornaments, pearl necklaces, peacock armlets and a rich girdle, she is indicating with her two hands the chief functions of the maternal principle: the left supports, rather presses, a nourishing breast, while her right indicates her sex, besides holding a small lotus stem of three buds placed at the middle of the girdle in front. Coomaraswamy on the basis of the profuse lotuses surrounding the figure, rightly considers it to represent the goddess Śrī Lakṣmī. Thus the motif of the female figure pressing her breast, the source of all human sustenance, and indicating her sex, the power, denoting fertility, possessed of symbolic meaning demonstrates with certainty the maternal functions which have been hinted at in the earlier female figures by making them naked with their hips exaggerated and breasts fully rounded. It further demonstrates the qualities of a

Mother-Goddess that came to be attached to the goddess Lakṣmī, thereby identifying the two with one another. And as it is fully adorned with elaborate ornaments, it also suggests her to be the goddess of wealth.

Coming to the Vedic period, there are a number of feminine divinities, who have been occasionally mentioned in the *Ṛk* and other Saṁhitās, the earliest known literature of the Indians. With the exception of Aditi, little significance has been attached to them. Puraṁdhi,[35] regarded as the Vedic form of the Avestan Parendi, appears as the goddess of plenty, and Rāka[36] as a rich and beautiful goddess. Vāsinī, the ruling goddess, mentioned in various Gṛahyasūtras, is probably the mother-goddess who despite all Vedic influences, always was the chief spiritual village power identified with Śiva's wife in various forms.[37] Sinivālī, another interesting goddess called Viṣṇu's wife in *Atharvaveda*[38] is described as the sister of the gods, fair-armed, fair-fingered, prolific and mistress of the family (Viṣpatnī) and is invoked for granting off-spring[39]; and elsewhere, she and Sarasvatī are asked to bear progeny.[40] It is, however, difficult to say which of these goddesses might have served the sole prototype of goddess Lakṣmī, for all of them are goddesses of plenty and reminiscient of the goddess as such.[41] Words like Śrī no doubt occur in the *Ṛgveda*, but they do not stand for the goddess as such rather they are used in a general way connoting beauty.[42] This conception of Śrī, however, does not disappear in the later Vedic literature, rather the abstract conception of Śrī, takes a concrete form in the curious story narrated in the *Satapatha Brāhmaṇa*, which relates how Śrī of Prajāpati was driven out by his *tapas* from within himself when he became tired of creating beings and stood there shining, brilliant and sensuous like a heavenly woman.[43] 'Here we can clearly see', remarks Motichandra,[44] 'the transference of an abstract idea of beauty to the visual form of a heavenly body, possibly the great Mother Goddess of pre-Aryan India, who possibly carried within herself the idea of beauty and plentitude'. The story proceeds on: "Her beauty and resplendence made the gods envy her and they wanted to kill her, but Prajāpati dissuaded them from this as she was a female and asked them to take away all her attributes from her, sparing her life. Then Agni, Soma, Varuṇa Mitra, Indra, Bṛhaspati, Savitṛ, Pūṣaṇ, Sarasvatī and Tvaṣṭṛ took from her food, kingdom, universal sovereignty, noble rank, power, holy lustre, dominion, wealth, prosperity and beautiful forms respectively. Then on Prajāpati's advice, she after offering ten sacrificial dishes to the ten divinities had everything restored to her."[45] According to Banerjea,[46] the inner significance of the story is not difficult to understand and the goddess embodies all the good things coveted by man. The *Taittriya Upaniṣad*[47] also emphasizes this character of the goddess, where Śrī is said to bring garments, cows, food and drink : "therefore bring me Śrī".

It may however, be noted that Śrī and Lakṣmī appear together in the *Taittiriya Āraṇyaka*[48] and *Vājasaneyī*[49] *Saṁhitā* as the two heavenly women, the combination leading to the complete identification of the two. No

difference whatsover is, however, noticeable between Sri and Lakṣmi in the Śrī Sūkta,[50] a late supplement of the *Ṛgveda* datable before the Pāli Buddhist texts. In a hymn of this literacy document, she is called the one possessed of lotus (*Padminī*), the one standing on lotus (*Padmasthitā*), the lotus covered (*padma-varṇā*) and the lotus born (*padma Sambhavā*). She is lotus-eyed (*padmākśī*), has her thighs lotus like (*padmaurū*), has a lotus face (*padmānana*) dwells in the lotus lake (*sarsijanīlayā*), is fond of lotus (*padmapriyā*) and carries a lotus in her hand. She is delighted by the trumpeting of elephants (*hastināda pramodinī*). She is the goddess of the fertility of soil, which is derived from water, and she bestows cows, gold, horses and slaves. She is, therefore, goddess of riches and prosperity. She wears 'garlands of gold and silver' and is the very embodiment of royal splendour, bestowing fame (*kīrtti*) and success (*ṛddhi*) and granting prosperity and long life, health and offspring. She is also the goddess earth (*Kṣamādevī*) and the mother of all creatures (*prajānāṁ bhavasi mātā*).[51] In the opinion of Coomaraswamy,[52] lotus is a symbol of waters and as such connected with fertility. The deity is invoked to destory *alakṣmī*,[53] bad luck, poverty and to bestow cattle and progeny. She is connected with vegetation and the *bilva* tree (wood apple) is specially hers.[54]

It is in the epics that she attains her full iconographic significance, in which her various traits are referred to in different contexts. She is said to have been churned out of the ocean along with the Uccaiśrava horse, wine, nectar[55] etc. and she fell to the share of Viṣṇu. She is treated in the epic as the mother of Kāmadeva[56] and in that capacity she bore on her hand a *makara* as an auspicious symbol. Her close association with Kubera is also emphasized in some passages of the *Mahābhārata*. She is described as attending the court of Kubera in the Company of Nalakūbera (sometimes described as Kubera's son).[57] Elsewhere, Yakṣeśa is described as united with Lakṣmī.[58] In the *Rāmāyaṇa*[59] she is said to be represented on Kubera's car with lotus in her hand. She is also luck. At one place in the *Mahābhārata*[60] she asserts: "All virtues strive to attain my qualities. I am success, steadfastness and prosperity". In some later epic passages, she is expressly named as Kubera's consort and the ideological union of the goddess of prosperity with the god of riches is easily undersandable.[61]

The goddess Lakṣmī is treated with scant respect in the Buddhist literature, the *Milindapanha*.[62] In the *Srikalakanni Jātaka*,[63] Siri-Mātā, regent of the east, is made to say, "I preside over the course of conduct that gives lordship to mankind: I am beauty (Siri) fortune (*Lakṣmī*) and prudence". In another Jātaka,[64] Siri, beautiful as a morning star, says: 'The man to whom I wish Joy, enjoys all pleasures'. In the *Dhammapada Aṭṭhakathā*,[65] she is simply the goddess who gives luck to the kingdom (*rajjasiridayikā-devatā*) as epithet, which goes very well with her conception in the Gupta period.

Śrī-Lakṣmī maintains her auspicious character in the Jaina literature.

In the *Kalpa Sūtra*,[66] Śrī is one of the fourteen auspicious dreams of Trisalā *forestalling* the birth of Mahāvīra. Her description clearly follows her iconographic representations. She is described as wearing a garland of Dināras (gold coins) on her breast, reposing on the lotus of a lotus lake amidst the height of the Himālayas, anointed by the waters (poured upon her) by the strong thick trunks of the elephants of the quarters.

In the mediaeval Hindu literature, the epic conception of Śrī-Lakṣmī persists. As a goddess of fortune, lotus in hand, she consorted with kings.[67] Heroines are compared to her for their beauty. Sometimes she is also abused for her fickleness.

Sri-Laksmi has been described in the *Abhilaṣitārātha Cintāmaṇi*[68] as white complexioned, seated on lotus, holding Śrī-phala in her right hand and lotus in her left, with two elephants anointing her. According to the *Nayasaṁgraha*,[69] she should have lotus in her hands, a lotus garland and elephants bathing her. The *Matsya Purāṇa*[70] also mentions that Gaja-Laksmī bathed by two elephants should carry Śrī-phala and lotus in her hands. She is of golden colour and seated on lotus. According to the *Viṣṇudharmottara*,[71] when accompanied by Hari, she should have two arms carrying beautiful lotuses in them but when represented separately, she should have four-arms, seated upon a lotus pericarp and holding a lotus with a long stalk in her right hand and a nectar pot in the left, with a conch and *bilva* fruit in the remaining ones. On either side is an elephant emptying water on her head from pots presented by attendant celestial maidens. The *Śilparatna*[72] also describes her as two or four-armed and mentions that the two-armed figure accompanying Viṣṇu should have *bilva* fruit in the right hand and lotus in the left, whereas the four-armed goddess[73] may have the same objects in her hands as recounted in the *Viṣṇudharmottara* or lotus in two of her hands and the remaining ones exhibiting *Varada* and *abhaya* poses.[74] It also provides two elephants anointing her and adds that her eight petalled lotus seat should be placed upon *siṁhāsana*. The *Aṁsumadbhedāgama*,[75] which describes her differently, mentions her golden yellow, like that of a maiden who has just attained her age, very handsome in appearance, with a lotus flower and *bilva* fruit in her hands. There are also texts, which refer to her not only two or four armed but rarely many-armed,[76] the two armed variety being more common.[77] Nearly all the texts describe her as well dressed, decked with various ornaments, having such physical traits as fully developed breasts, a narrow waist and heavy buttocks indicative of radiant and healthy motherhood wherein lies the real beauty of a female body, and according to Banerjea,[78] a comparatively late text names such a type as *Nyagrodhaparimaṇḍala*.

The *Viśvakarmāśāstra*,[79] however, describes the figure of Mahā-Lakṣmī as found in a Kolhapur temple (W. Deccan) as holding a vessel (*pātra*) and a club (gadā named *Kaumodakī*) in her right hands and a shield (*kheṭaka*) and a wood-apple in the left. Her developed form with eighteen arms and

various weapons is described in the *Devī Māhātmya* section of the *Mārkayṇḍeya Purāṇa*,[80] but according to Banerjea,[81] it illustrates one of the primary aspects of the principal cult icon of the Śāktas, which stands for supreme fountain head of all divine power.

A distinguishing feature of goddess Śrī-Lakṣmī is her close association with lotus symbolising waters. As pointed out by Coomaraswamy,[82] in iconography, Śrī-Lakṣmīṣ is associated with lotus in three different ways, (i) *Padma-hastā*, in which she holds the lotus in her right hand, (ii) She is supported by an expanded lotus flower serving a *pīṭha*, (iii) as *padamavāsinī* or *padmalayā* type in which she is surrounded by flowering stems and growing leaves ; also at times holding lotus in each hand. Elephant is significantly associated with Śrī-Lakṣmī in her representations as Gaja-Lakśmī or Abhiseka Lakṣmī. It is noteworthy that at Bhārhut a frail flower like lotus is associated with an elephant standing over it, because of its association with water as the source of all life. The extended lotus in the mediaeval period signifying the manifested universe and the lotus as a symbol of purity are of secondary development. In the words of Coomaraswamy,[83] the fundamental conception as expressed in the later Vedic literature and in the early iconography is that of the waters, as the support, both ultimate and physical, of all life and sepcially of the each, whence there follows naturally, the use as *āsana* and *pīṭha*'.

The portraiture of Lakṣmī in Gaja-Lakṣmī and Śrī aspects on the coins started with the tribal coins. A study of coins from Ujjaini and Ayodhyā, reveals the figure of Lakṣmī. The Kuṇindas also depicted Lakṣmī on their coins. But we see that the period represented by the tribal and local coins of northern India[84] is an early period of history (2nd first century B.C.). when the iconography of the Brahmanical deities or for that matter any other deity had not taken the final shape. As we have seen earlier, Lakṣmī attains her full iconographic significance only during the epic period, but, her full-fledged and minute iconic representation was beyond our understanding and conception. The attributes of Lakṣmī would, therefore, naturally be less on the tribal and local coins than the coins of the later period, i.e., the Gupta period, when the iconography had taken the final shape. Moreover, the detailed iconographic representations of Lakṣmī on the Gupta coins indicate the tremendous economic prosperity India had achieved under the Imperial Guptas. The iconographic representations of Lakṣmī on the coins issued by the Gupta kings betray a definite and marked improvement upon the same of the earlier period.

Again we find that the portraiture of Lakṣmī on the coins of the Gupta period was under definite foreign influence in the beginning. If we study the history of India, we see that India was groaning under the foreign rule of the Indo-Greeks, the Śakas and the Kusāṇas, etc. The imprint of the foreign culture on the iconography of the Indian deities could not be undone. For example, Lakṣmī on the Gupta coins is seen frequently holding

cornucopiae in her hand. Of course, cornucopiae is a suitable attribute of Lakṣmī, who is the goddess of fortune and plenty. Cornucopiae is not doubt the horn of plenty but obviously it is of the foreign import, which we adopted under the influence of the Indo-Greeks.

Now, let us, see how far the portraits of Lakṣmī represented on the coins of the Imperial Guptas conform to the description of Lakṣmī as laid down in the texts on iconography. We learn that Lakṣmī was a goddess of fortune, plenty and moreover, sovereignty and therefore, she was very popular and a motif of the Gupta mintmasters. On the reverse of the gold coins of Kāca, Lakṣmī appears nimbate, standing to left on a circular carpet wearing Sārı, bodice upper garment, ear-ring, necklace, and armlet, holding a flower in her right hand,[85] else Cornucopiae[86] and noose[87] in variety C. Lakṣmī figures not only on the coins of Kāca, whose identity is still a controversial issue, but also on the coins of Samudragupta, Candragupta II, Kumāragupta I, Skanda- and Buddhagupta etc. Of all the types of coins issued by Samudragupta, the standard type is the most popular one. The goddess Lakṣmī[88] on the reverse of the standard type of coins issued by Samudragupta appears nimbate. seated facing on throne with lathe-turned legs, wearing a Sārī, a bodice, an upper garment, a necklace, armlet and a circular pearlbordered ornament round the face. She holds cornucopiae in her left hand and a noose in the right. Lakṣmī is portrayed on the Gupta coins in a variety of postures. The earlier series of the Gupta coins depict Lakṣmī invariably with a cornucopiae in her hand. A very fine example of Lakṣmī, well-dressed and wearing a lot of ornaments, with noose in her right out-stretched hand and a cornucopiae in the left resting on the left shoulder, appears on the reverse of the Standard type gold coins of Samudragupta.[89] On the reverse of the Lyrist type gold coins of Samudragupta, Lakṣmī appears seated on a wicker stool. She holds a noose (*pāśa*) in the right hand stretched out and bent and a cornucopiae in the left hand resting on the waist. The cornucopiae in the hands of Lakṣmī on the coins of the early Gupta series indicates the trace of foreign influence on Indian numismatics. The identity of the goddess on the standard type coins of Samudragupta, according to Altekar, is difficult to determine. He comments on the above noted coin as follows : "The mintmasters have deliberately expunged her Roman name Ardoksho. It is clear that they desired to identify her with an Indian deity, who was most probably Lakṣmī, the consort of Viṣṇu, whose mount *Garuḍa* appears on the standard on the obverse. She, however, has no peculiar symbol of that goddess for example lotus, and we cannot exclude the possibility of the goddess being Durgā, who figured on the reverse of the coins of Candragupta I as indicated by her mount lion". But we do not find the lion-mount of Durgā in any way associated with the deity on the Standard type coins. To the contrary, a study of the Greek literature would reveal that the cornucopiae was the horn of plenty, which Lakṣmī is expected to shower on her devotees. The idea

of the Gupta-mint-masters was certainly Indian but the expression was foreign India had been liberated from the foreign domination quite recently and it was impossible for the mint-masters to banish the western influence on the Indian coins so quickly. Moreover, cornucopiae in the Greek mythology is described as an attribute of Demeter, Ardoksho or any other goddess who showered fortune and plenty upon her followers. So Cornucopiae is rather a positive proof to identify the deity with Indian Laksmī. Should we not take the association of cornucopiae with Lakṣmī as the best example of cultural interaction, which India and western world had upon each other ? The Gupta mint-masters were trying to Indianise the foreign type as much as numismatic conservatism would permit. The cornucopiae, as we shall notice, was later on replaced by full-blown lotus in the hand of the deity. The lotus seat was also provided to Lakṣmī.

Although Cornucopiae as an attribute of the goddess, who has been sought to be identified with Lakṣmī disappears in the later type, the noose (*pāśa*) continues. Noose appears in the right hand of the goddess Lakṣmī, who is seated on lotus and holds a lotus bud in her left hand.[90] What after all is the meaningfulness of noose as an attribute in the hand of Lakṣmī, who is goddess of beauty, fortune and plenty ? It is well-known that Lakṣmī is the goddess of royal splendour and sovereignty. Noose probably is the insignia of sovereignty and may stand as a mark of kingship indicating king's capacity to inflict punishment. The noose as an attribute in the hand of Lakṣmī indicates that she presides over the sovereignty and, therefore, is the goddess of royalty. Noose continues on the coins issued by the kings of the late Gupta dynasty.

As we have seen earlier the portraits on the reverse side of the Imperial Gupta coinage were under foreign influence in the beginning which becomes clear from the presence of cornucopiae as an attribute of Goddess Lakṣmī. But gradually there was a movement for the Indianisation of the reverse motifs and the mint-masters were trying their best to introduce Indian and Brahmanical devices. We see that Lakṣmī was well-dressed in bodice, upper garment, Sārī, etc. and wears ornaments like bangles, ear-ring, armlet, pear-bordered ornament, necklace etc. The profusely garmented and ornamented Lakṣmī, as depicted on the Gupta coins, is clearly indicative of the royal splendour she represents. That Lakṣmī was the goddess of royal splendour and sovereignty is testified to by the numismatic representations.

The goddess Lakṣmī is further indianised by being depicted with a lotus in her hand and even seated on an eight-petalled lotus. Lakṣmī with a lotus in her hand or seated on an expanded lotus becomes the most popular theme of the Indian mint-masters during the Gupta period. Lakṣmī has been described in literature as wearing a garland of gold coins, which indicates that she presides over the royal treasury. On the reverse of the Horseman type gold coins of Candragupta II,[91] housed in the State Musuem, Lucknow

goddess Lakṣmī standing to front, holds in her right hand a garland. Her left hand holds a full-blown lotus with a stalk. The goddess wears a skirt tied with a girdle and also a number of ornaments. The same goddess nimbate again appears with the only difference that she is seated to left on a wicker stool.[92] Lakṣmī seated on lotus appears on the reverse of the Archer type coins of Candragupta II.[93] She wears necklace, bangles, armlets and ear-rings, and holds lotus bud in the left hand and noose in the right. Again Lakṣmī nimbate appears within dotted border seated on lotus facing, holding lotus with a long stalk in the left hand resting on the thigh' the right hand is bent up and holds a noose.[94] On the reverse of the Archer type gold coins of Candragupta II,[95] Lakṣmī nimbate appears seated facing on a high-backed cushioned throne wearing Sārī, upper garment; ear-ring and necklace. Her right hand is sometimes empty sometimes holding a *pāśa* (noose) and sometimes a garland or rosary. The left hand on waist or thigh holding sometimes a cornucopiae rests on the shoulder and sometimes on a lotus. The feet of the goddess rest on a circular mat. The goddess holding lotus or noose in her hands appears on the reverse of many coins.[96]

Another very important example of the iconographic representation of Śrī-Lakṣmī is found on the reverse of the Elephant-Rider type coins of Kumāragupta I.[97] Here Lakṣmī stands facing on a lotus flower, grasping a stalk of lotus growing beside her in her right hand and holding lotus flower in the left. There is some uncertain object (vase ?) on the left. On the Archer type coins of Candragupta II, Lakṣmī appears invariably as seated on a lotus seat and holding lotus in either of her hands. On the reverse of the Apratigha type coins of Kumāragupta I, Lakṣmī nimbate is depicted seated, facing on a beautiful full-down double-pettaled lotus and her right hand holding a lotus with a long stalk having two lotus buds at the bottom.[98] The goddess with cornucopiae in her hand and lotus in other hand on the coin which has on the obverse Garuḍa Standard also is admittedly Lakṣmī in her Śrí-aspect.[99]

The Chatra type[100] coins of Skandagupta also show the goddess holding a noose in her right hand and a lotus with a long stalk in the left and standing on a conventional lotus. On the coins of Skandagupta[101] and his successors Ghaṭotakacagupta,[102] Narasiṃhagupta,[103] Kumāragupta, II,[104] Buddhagupta,[105] Prakāsāditya,[106] Samācāradeva Narendrāditya[107] the goddess recurs as sitting on a full-blown lotus with a noose and a lotus in her hands.

A comparative study of the representations of Lakṣmī as appearing on the coins of the Gupta period will indicate that the Gupta monarch were concerned with her that particular aspect, which represented royal splendour and material aspect. Her dress, her ornaments, sometimes her lotus seat and lotus in either hand with or without leaves and buds make it clear that she was a goddess, who was prayed for showering prosperity in life. Because lotus is the life giving waters, Lakṣmī is depicted on coins with her inseparable attributes lotus in her hands or lotus as her seat.

Śrī-Lakṣmī appears on the railings and the gateways at Bhārhut, Bodh Gayā and Sāñcī datable in the 2nd-1st centuries B.C. One of the female figures at Bhārhut standing to front with even feet and holding some flower (looking like Dhaturā of a bunch of lotus) with raised right hand is labelled as Sirimā-devatā.[108] Her name 'Siri' is very characteristic and the epithet 'mā' particularly noteworthy, suggesting thereby the mother aspect of the goddess Śrī (Siri-Sri. ma-mata, mother). A female standing on a full blown lotus and holding a lotus in her raised right hand at Bhārhut[109] closely resembles Śrī Lakṣmī type. In the railing at Bodh-Gayā[110] she stands on the pericarp of a lotus blossom, keeping the heels of the feet in touch with each other and the toes wide apart. She remains standing in a delightful pose holding a bunch of lotus buds in one hand and that of lotus blossoms in the other, her hands being stretched forth horizontally from her two sides. In the *stūpa* at Sāñcī datable in the Śunga period,[111] Śrī Lakṣmī is depicted at one place as a Kamalālayī, standing in growing lotus plants, holding blossoming lotus flowers in both the hands. At another place, she holds a lotus in her right hand[112] and perhaps a towel in the left, a developed form of which is usually met with on the Gupta gold coins, where Śrī is shown holding ribbon or towel. As a result we see that both in sculpture and numismatics, it is lotus that is most prominently connected with the goddess Lakṣmī. Emphasis has been laid in literature, sculpture and numismatics as well on the association of lotus either as an attribute of goddess Lakṣmī or as her seat. In case of lotus being depicted as her seat, it is expanded and many petalled. The coins issued by the later kings of the Imperial Gupta dynasty bear testimony to the trends towards complete Indianisation of both idea and image of goddess Lakṣmī in the sense that lotus simple or sometime having long stalk with leaves and buds become an inseparable part of her iconic representation. But Śrīphal (wood apple) does not appear as her attribute on the coins as it was a development of the mediaeval period. Further, Indianisation of goddess Lakṣmī is indicated by the practice of removing circular mat carpet as seat, which had no meaning to the goddess of prosperity, royal splendour and sovereignty. It was replaced by the lotus covered throne. The youthful, body, proportionate growth of very organ indicated her aspect of being the goddess of youth and beauty. Śrī-Lakṣmī was the most favourite choice of the Gupta mint-masters. A comparative study of Śrī Lakṣmī in literature, sculpture and numismatics lends support to the theory that the coins bearing her portrait conform to greater extent the norms laid down in the texts on iconography. The iconic representation of Lakṣmī on the Gupta coins is sometimes more lively in execution than the sculptures. They are the authentic representations of Lakṣmī during the Gupta period, as the kings were vying among themselves to prove their devotion to the goddess.

But Lakṣmī in her Gaja Lakṣmī or Abhiśeka aspect, which was portrayed on the tribal coins and continued to be portrayed even later on, could find favour with the Gupta mint-masters. Though she is very common on

the seals of the Gupta period, she was not portrayed on the coins for which there is no explanation. One of the seals from Basārh[113] represents Lakṣmī standing in the midst of a group of trees with elephants pouring water over here, while two dwarfish figures are holding objects like money-bags. Gaja-Lakṣmī with a dwarf attendant is also found associated with a money-bag on the seal of the *Śreṣṭhī Sārthavāha Kulika Nigama* (guild of merchants and bankers).[114] Still another seal[115] shows Gaja-Lakṣmī with a male figure kneeling on either side and throwing coins from their bags. Lakṣmī appears also on many other official seals[116] invariably accompanied by a *Yakṣa* on her either side pouring out money from their purses. Bloch thought these attendants to be *Kuberas*, but Banerjea[117] identified them with *Yakṣas*. The seal of the office Rājagṛha Viṣaya[118] has a standing figure of Gaja-Lakṣmī flanked by an elephant and a seated corpulent figure my be that of a *Yakṣa*. There are a flag staff in the pot and flowers on sides. Another seal[119] also shows Gaja-Lakṣmī standing on a lotus and flanked by a seated male figure on either side. Still another seal[120] depicts the goddess with a pair of elephants showering water over her, her right hand being placed on a money-bag or a box kept at her side. The seals under study here present before use altogether a different view about the Abhiṣeka aspect of goddess Lakṣmī. In the images of Gaja-Lakṣmī on the coins of earlier period (e.g. the tribal coins and the local coins of Ujjayini and Ayodhyā etc.), we find Lakṣmī seated on lotus and elephants pouring water from the jars upturned by the upraised trunks but we do not find the attendant figure, whom the scholars think to be *Yakṣa* or *Kubera*, with whom the union of Lakṣmī is logical. The aspect of Lakṣmī as the goddess of wealth and prosperity is over emphasized on the seals under reference here. This becomes clear either from the fact of Lakṣmī being attended upon by male figures beside her with purses and money-bags. The Abhiṣeka image of Lakṣmī is added with attendant male figures, who throw coins from the money-bag held in the hand of the goddess Lakśmī. In fitness with the tremendous economic prosperity, India achieved under the Imperial Guptas, the aspect of Lakṣmī as the bestower of richness and wealth received emphasis, which will become clear from the study of the following lines.

During the Gupta period, Lakṣmī is very closely associated with the cult of Kubera, the lord of riches and wealth, Lakṣmī's association with Kubera is already known from certain sculptures of the Kuṣāna period, in which the two deities are reprensented side by side. On the gateways at Sanci, Lakṣmī is also seen in association with the *Yakṣas Yakṣiaīs* where they are shown either bringing food and drinks or simply as *Mithuna* figures. But in the Gupta age, Lakṣmī's conception as the goddess of weaith seems to have topped over her other attributes so much so that the genii are always represented as pouring out coins from bags. Not only this, rather certain coins also are seen trickling down from the hand of the goddess herself. Not only on seals but also on certain coins of the Throne reverse class of the Archer type

of Chandragupta[121] and the Archer type of Kumāragupta I[122], the goddess is represented as scattering round objects, presumably coins by her right hand. Lakṣmī's conception as the goddess of wealth is also emphasized by placing a conch-shell in her hand on one of the seals from Bhīṭā[123] as conch is considered to be one of the *niddhis*. A conch-shell is also shown below the right hand of the goddess on the Cakravikrama type of Candragupta II[124] and the conch figures also in the lower right corner of the Elephant-rider type of Kumāragupta I[125]. The Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa[126] speaks of Lakṣmī as the presiding deity of the eight treasures, recounted as *padma mahāpadma, makara, Kachchapa, Mukunda, nīla. Anandi* and *Śankha.* Lakṣmī, particularly as the goddess of wealth and trade, the most important source of acquiring wealth, is remarkably depicted on a unique seal of the Gupta period from Basārh.[127] The seal depicts a barge with roll-like decks and oars along with perpendicular standards. In the central part rises somewhat a square platform on which stands the goddess nimbate, with her left hand on the hip and the right one raised. She is wearing highly diaphanous draperies, which are the characteristics of the Gupta period. To her proper left is a conch and further left probably a winged lion or humed bull standing. The association of Lakṣmī with the barge clearly indicates the connection of the goddess of wealth with the trade.[128]

Vaiṣṇavism during the Gupta period is characterised by the conception of Lasksmī as the consort of Viṣṇu. The Gupta inscriptions are the first epigraphic records, which mention Śrī-Lakṣmī's union with Viṣṇu. The Junāgarh inscription of the time of Skandagupta[129] refers to Viṣṇu as one, who is the permanent abode of Lakṣmī, the goddess, who dwells in lotus. The Gwalior stone inscription of Mihirakula[130] speaks of Viṣṇu as one, who bears the goddess Śrī on his breast. Another inscription of the last quarter of the 5th or the 1st quarter of the 6th Century A.D.[131] describes Nārāyaṇa as the god, whose breast is embraced by one who has her dwelling in lotus i.e. Lakṣmī. A Kadamba record of 500 A. D.[132] begins with an adoration of the Bhāgavat who has Śrī on his breast and a little later the Sārnāth inscription of Prakaṭāditya[133] and the Aphsaḍ inscription of Ādityasena[134] speak of Śrī as the wife of Vāsudeva. After thorough examination of Viṣṇu and Lakṣmī images, Jaiswal[135] came to the conclusion that Lakṣmī was admitted to the Vaiṣṇavite pantheon during the Gupta age (4th Century A.D.) during which she was united with Viṣṇu. Perhaps the growing importance of the Viṣṇu cult was responsible to some extent for the coupling of the popular goddess Laksmī with Viṣṇu.[136] This may explain why Lakṣmī has been given Vaiṣṇava emblems in her representations on certain Gupta coins and seals. As already seen, conch, which is definitely an attribute of Viṣṇu, figures in association with Lakṣmī on some coins of Candragupta II[137] and Kumāragupta I[138] and also on the seals from Bhītā[139] and Basārh.[140] Even a seal from Bhītā[141] represents the goddess holding not only the emblem of Lord Viṣṇu in her right hand but also carrying his vehicle, the Garuḍa, in the left. It is probably on this bird that she is placing her hand in another seal.[142] The

Gupta seals and coins thus illustrate the ideological union of Lakṣmī with Viṣṇu.

On the coins of the Candragupta—Kumāradevī type, on those of the Lion-slayer type of Candragupta II and Kumāragupta I and on the King-and-Queen type of Kumāragupta I, Lakṣmī is found seated on the back of a lion.

The Candragupta—Kumāradevī type[143] represents her seated on a lion couchant with a noose and a cornucopiae in her hands, that is, with the objects she appears on the standard type of Samudragupta and so also on certain other types. On the lion-salyer type of Candragupta II,[144] she has been variously seated on the lion, which on certain coins of the type can be seen walking to the right.[145] On these coins, the goddess is sometimes found holding a noose and a cornucopiae in her hands, sometimes a noose and a lotus and sometimes simply a lotus in one of her hands, the other hand being empty and placed on the waist or hanging down. On the Lion-salyer type of Kumāragupta I[146] as well, she is seated on a lion couchant and shown carrying either a noose and a lotus, or a garland and a lotus, or simply a lotus in the right hand, the left hand being empty and resting on the waist or shown scattering coins by the right and holding lotus in the left hand. She figures also on the King-and-Queen type of Kumāragupta I[147] as seated on a lion couchant with a lotus in her right hand and leaning on the left, resting on the thigh. Traditionally the lion is the vehicle of Durgā, and according to the *Viṣṇudharmottara* the shrine of Durgā is to be marked with the lion emblem.

Generally Durgā and Lakṣmī are mentioned in contrast to each other. *The manusmṛti*[148] apparently emphasizes the distinction when it advises that a house holder should make an offering to Śrī near her head and to Bhadrakālī (evidently the same as Durgā) near the feet of her bad. The Gupta gold coins, however, suggest the affinity of the two goddesses. Lakṣmī is usually described as *padmahastā* and *padmāsanā* in the iconographic texts[149] while the goodess Durgā is provided with a lion for her *vāhana* (*Siṁhavāhīni*) Consequently, we are intriqued to notice on the reverse of some of the Gupta coins a goddess holding lotus in her hands but riding a lion. She has not been identified with certainty and the numismatists have usually described her as Lakṣmī or Ambikā. Hemādrī has, however, referred to a type of Lakṣmī which is Siṁhavāhinī[150] B.C. Bhattacharya[151] who has drawn our attention to this reference, however, states that "no image of this description has yet come down to us." But this type of image is not confined to coins alone. The identity of Lakṣmī and her affinity with Durgā is further confirmed by the evidence of an image at Khajurāho[152] in which Lakṣmī is provided with a lion-mount. Gaja-Lakṣmī having a lion as her vehicle is shown seated in the *ardhaparyaṅka* pose in the conventional manner with two elephants anointing her with the jars held upturned in their trunks raised high. The goddess is four-armed, two of which hold lotus stalks and a couchant lion is depicted

below her seat. Save the lion-mount, the Khajurāho image does not recrod any other inconographic difference from usual Gaja-Lakṣmī figures. Just because goddess on coins under study here is provided with a lion-mount, it cannot be Durgā. Because attributes in the hands of the deity e.g. the cornucopiae and the lotus with or without stalk and leaves are of meaningfulness to the goddess of wealth and property. Lotus is life-giving and cornucopiae is the horn of plenty. This unlike representation of Lakṣmī according to R.K. Dikshit should solve the problem of the identity of the goddess on the Gupta coins.[153]

Cakrapuruṣa

Viṣṇu is one of the supreme deities in Brahmanical pantheon. Though in the Hindu trinity he comes after Brahmā; yet he remains pre-eminent. He is the legendary preserver of the universe. He, however, occupied a secondary position in the *Ṛgveda*[154] and is conceived as the sun in its three stages rising, zenith and setting. He has thus solar association in the *Ṛgveda* and courses through the three divisions of the universe, the god being manifest in three-fold form as Agni on earth. Indra and Vayu in atmosphere and Sūrya in sky.[155] One of the most important of the Brāhmaṇical cults that came into being some centuries before the beginning of the Christian era centred round Viṣṇu but this god was not identical with the Vedic Viṣṇu [156]. Later on his association with sacrifice made him an important deity as the importance of secrifice increased.[157]. In the Epics and the *Purāṇas*, Viṣṇu retains his supremacy and manifests himself as the supreme god-all powerful, all pervading and the saviour of all living beings. In the *Bhiṣmaparvan* of the *Mahābhārata*, he is addressed both as Nārāyaṇa and Viṣṇu and also identified with Vāsudeva.[158] We get evidence of his worship as early as the Śunga and the Kuṣāṇa periods.[159] The earliest representation of Viṣṇu in human form is, however, found in the Kuṣāṇa period.[160] With the advent of the Guptas, the worship of Viṣṇu received a fresh impetus and the image of the god became much common. We also know that the Gupta kings were mostly *Paramabhāgavatas*, i.e., the staunch devotees ot Viṣṇu. Viṣṇuism received royal patronage which resulted in the propagation of this cult.

The four-armed figure of Viṣṇu, as described in the *Bṛhat Saṁhitā* of Varāhamihira, should exhibit the posture of *abhaya* and carry a mace by his right hand, the left hands holding a conch-shell and a discus.[161] The four-armed image of Viṣṇu have usually *śaṁkha*, *cakra*, *gadā* and *padma*, the four-emblems having been placed differently in the hands of the images. In the Gupta and the post-Gupta periods, *cakra* and *gadā*, the two attributes of Viṣṇu are sometimes found supported by a male and a female called Cakrapuruṣa and Gadādevī. According to the *Viṣṇudharmottara*,[162] the images of Viṣṇu should be one-faced, holding mace and discus in his two hands. It also states that the images of Vāsudeva should be four-armed, beautifully executed, having conch-shell neck, slim body with long arms and slender finger

with copper colour nails. The deity should wear a *kirīṭamukuṭa*, *vanamālā aṅgada*, *Keyūra*, *Kaustubhamaṇī*, *Kaṭivastra*, *Yajñopavīta* and lotus-shaped halo. He should carry a full-blossomed lotus in his right hand and a conch-shell in the left. On his right hand, the Gadādevī and on the left the Cakrapuruṣa should be beautifully executed. The deity should place his two hands on their heads.

The *Matsya Purāṇa*[163] mentions that the four-armed Visṇu should carry mace and lotus in the right hands and the conch and discus in the left ones. One of the Nālandā statuettes tallies iconographically with the image from Kurkihāra as Viṣṇu carries the lotus bud, the conch-shell, the mace and the discus in his front right, front left, back right and back left hands respectively.[164] It is, however, interesting to note that the image of Viṣṇu, the principal deity of the Vaiṣṇava cult, is not seen in anthropomorphic form on the coins of the Guptas. However. the Cakravikrama type coin, which was issued in all probabilities by Candragupta II, is of particular interest. The Cakravikrama type coin is known from a single specimen in the Bayānā Hoard.[165] The reverse side of the coin bears god Cakrapuruṣa the personification of Sudarśana Cakra of Viṣṇu who has been shown standing to right within a double-rimmed wheel, oval in shape and going round his entire person above the knees. The spokes of the rim are indicated by its knobs appearing outside the inner and outer rim of the wheel and its extent portion shows 38 or 39 of them. The deity is wearing a crown but is bare-bodied, wearing dhotī, necklace, wristlets, holding a mace in the left hand hanging by his side and offering by his right hand, bent and raised up, three round objects held in his palm, to the king standing and facing him, nimbate, bare-headed and wearing ear-ring, necklace, armlets, tunic and trousers with prominent folds round the legs. The king is extending with his right hand, bent up to receive the divine gift, his left hand being placed on the hilt of a sword haging along the left leg. The sword is fastened by a strap to the king's waist, which passes through a hole in the hilt.

The unique coin does not give out the name of the issuer but its attribution to Candragupta II is rendered almost certain by the biruda *Vikrama*, which forms part of the legend on the reverse. Cakravikrama is similar in composition to 'Ajītavikrama' and 'Siṁhavikrama'[166] which occur on the Horseman and lion-slayer types of Candragupta II.

Candragupta II was a great devotee of Viṣṇu as is shown by one of his coin legends which describes him as *paramabhāgavata*. He also appears to have erected a *Garuḍadhvaja* at the famous *tīrtha* of Viṣṇupada somewhere on the Beas in the south-eastern Panjab.[167] The present type shows how he claimed to be the direct recepient of a favour from god Cakrapuruṣa, one of the Āyudhapuruṣās of Viṣṇu, who, in the Gupta age was believed to personify the power of Viṣṇu himself. Altekar earlier held the view that the divine personage on the obverse should be identified rather with Viṣṇu than with his Āyudhapuruṣa Cakra, on the ground that if the king was to be represented

as receiving a favour direct from god, he would naturally be represented as Viṣṇu rather than his Āyudhapuruṣa Cakra.[168] The new evidence brought to light subsequently by C. Sivaramamurti[169] and V.S. Agrawala[170] tends to show that the figure is that of Cakrapuruṣa rather than that of Viṣṇu. Viṣṇu with two hands only is unknown, Cakrapuruṣa has often two hands, though he sometimes has more. The *Ahirbudhnya Saṁhitā*[171] shows that Cakra or Sudarṣana Cakra, the most effective weapon of Viṣṇu, was identified with the Golden Puruṣa inside the sun and even with the supreme being, who is the mover of the Great Wheel of the universe (*jagachchakra*) i e., with Viṣṇu himself. The glorification of Cakra si carried to the extreme, we are told that whatever can be described as fit to be worshipped is but only a manifestation of Cakrapuruṣa. This Cakrapuruṣa is identified with Viṣṇu himself (*Cakrarupi Svayam Hariḥ*, 41.37). There is, therefore, nothing improbable in the mint-master having decided to represent the king as the recepient of an invaluable favour from Cakrapuruṣa rather than Cakradhārīn or Viṣṇu. The legend on the reverse Cakravikrama should, therefore, be interpreted as '*Cakravat-Vikramaḥ*, (one whose valour is like that of a Cakra i.e. Cakrapurūṣa). An alternative explanation according to Altkar would be '*Cakrāt prāptaḥ vikramaḥ yena saḥ*' (one who has derived his valour or invincibility from Cakra or Cakrapuruṣa himself[172].

The representation of Cakrapuruṣa on the obverse of the coin is in remarkable conformity with that given in the *Ahirbudhnya Saṁhitā.*[173] The king desirous of winning military glory and scoring great victories is advised to meditate on Cakrapuruṣa in the middle of wheel, having two rims and 64 spokes : he is to have two arms only.[174] The divine figure on the obverse of the coin has also two arms and is standing in the middle of a wheel, which has two rims clearly indicated. The dots on the rims are obviously intended to stand for the ends of the spokes. In that portion of the wheel, which is visible, their number is about 39; we can, therefore, well presume that the entire wheel was intended to have 64 spokes.[175]

We may, therefore, well presume that the obverse of this unique coin represents Candragupta II as receiving a divine favour direct from Cakrapuruṣa, who is manifesting Himself before him for that purpose. The *prasāda* in the form of three round objects may well be taken to symbolise three-fold royal power consisting of *prabhuśakti*, *utsāhaśakti* and *mantraśakti*, which together constitute the *Kriyāśakti* of a king, as Cakrapuruṣa is the representation of the Kriyāśakti of Viṣṇu.[176] About Āyudhpurūṣa, Banerjea says, "The phenomenal development of the practice of making images and worshipping them is interestingly indicated by the fact that even the attributes or weapons meant to be present placed in the hands of the deities were personified and represented anthropomorphically. Such representations came to be designated generally as Āyudhapuruṣās, and it is worthy of note that the feature was mostly associated with the emblems of Viṣṇu.[177] *Cakra* and *gadā* in the human forms are found as early as the Gupta period. Śaṁkha and rarely Padma

are also anthropomorphised in the Viṣṇuite reliefs of the early and late mediaeval periods of Eastern and Northern India. *Cakra* and *Padma* are neuter genders and the texts enjoin that they should be shown as eunuchs, but for all practical purposes they appear as male figures in the late Gupta and mediaeval art.[178] The Viṣṇucakra found at Sarisdaha (24-Parganas, West Bengal), now in the collection of the Asutosh Museum, Calcutta University, is a unique sculpture carved on both the sides with the same device.[179] It depicts a four-armed figure dancing on the shoulder of Garuḍa in the centre of a finely carved wheel, his front hands are beating time over his head (or shown in one form of obeisance, *namaskāra*), the back hands holding a *Cakra* and a *gadā*. Garuḍa and these two emblems prove that the figure inside the wheel is no other than Cakrapuruṣa, who is partly endowed with the character of Viṣṇu (cf. human representations of Adhikaranandin).[180] This is evidently Sudarśana, the *Cakra* par-excellence of Viṣṇu.[181] Lord Viṣṇu is nowhere represented himself on the Gupta coins. The Cakrapuruṣa has been depicted to represent Viṣṇu anthropomorphically.

Garuḍa : (Pls. XXXVa-b, XXXVIIa)

Garuḍa was portrayed on the Gupta coins, because it was associated with Viṣṇu as his vehicle. The bird has been portrayed sometimes independently and sometimes crowning the Vaisṇava standard. Because the Gupta emperors were staunch Vaisṇavas, they showed their respect to the god Visṇu by erecting standards being surmounted by Garuḍa (the eagle), thereby proving the *Garuḍadhvaja* to be the royal emblem.

Garuḍa appears as surmounting the standard on the obverse of the coins,[182] on the reverse of which Lakṣmī appears as the goddess of royalty, plenty and fortune. The portraiture of Garuḍa on such coins does lend weight to the theory that it was exclusively a Vaiṣṇava symbol. Garuḍa with outstretched wings appears in the centre;[183] on the right there is a cluster of seven dots. This coin was issued by Candragupta II, who declared himself to be a *Paramabhāgavata*.

On the reverse of copper coins of Candragupta II,[184] Garuḍa appears with the human face and hands but bird's body and wearing bracelets on arms. Garuḍa appears nimbate, standing, facing with outstretched wings. On the reverse of the variety of the Archer type copper coin of Candragupta II, Garuḍa stands on an altar and holds a snake in his mouth.[185] Further, Garuḍa is depicted within dotted border, in the upper half, with out-stretched wings; *Cakra* surmounted by crescent on left and Śaṅkha on right.[186] Garuḍa or Garutmān the mount of Viṣṇu, was originally the sun conceived as a bird.[187] The *Ṛgvedic* hymns to Sūrya contain many epithets, which had a hand in influencing many of his traits in the post-vedic age. In some, he is described as "the beautiful winged celestial bird Garutmān (Divya Suparṇa Garutmān)". From such a description arose the concept of Garuḍa, the mount of Viṣṇu. Garuḍa's another name is *Tārkṣya* in the Epic and Purāṇic

literature, occurring twice in some later verses of the *Ṛg-veda* (1, 89, 6 and X, 170, 1), denoting a horse. In many passages of the Great Epic, Garuḍa is formally identified with the Vedic Garutmān and is described as the brother of Aruṇa the forerunner of Sūrya; in the developed mythology of the epic and the Purāṇic periods, he is the son of sage Kāśyapa and Vinata (one of his names is Vainateya) and is thus the half-brother of Nāgās, sons of Kāśyapa by his other wife.[188] Garuḍa's enmity with Nāgās is proverbial and the texts ascribe it to the ill-treatment of his mother by her co-wife and step-sons.[189]

The earliest period, Garuḍa is represented as a huge parrot-like bird with emphasis on some of his features.[190] One such extant figure of Garuḍa is carved on the inner side of the middle architrave of the eastern gateway of Sāñcī.[191] The entire relief composition here shows the animal world paying homage to the Buddha symbolised by the Bodhidruma with Vajrāsana beneath it. In its right corner is carved a big parrot-like bird with ear-rings and a bushy tuft by the side of a five-headed snake. Grunwedel correctly recognised in these two motifs, Garuḍa and Nāga, and remarked, 'the native parrot type on the one hand and West Asian Griffin (this animal is also depicted, it has been intentionally left out) on the other are the bases upon which modern iconography developed its Garuḍa'.[192] In the Hellenistic art of Gāndhāra,[193] Garuḍa appears as a huge eagle decked with the same ear ornaments but the wings are treated more naturalistically. He is often depicted as carrying up to the sky a Nāga and a Nāginī either with his long-beak, or his big talons.[194] If we compare the depiction of Garuḍa on the Gupta coins with that of his portraiture on the architrave of the Sāñcī gateway, we find a lot of difference. Serpents are placed by the side of Garuḍa, which is not the case with the Gupta coinage. Here Garuḍa is depicted as surmounting the standard. This indicates that Garuḍa, which was the therimorphic representation of Lord Viṣṇu was the insignia of the Imperial Guptas or Garuḍa is seen figuring independently with human body and hands and bird's face or with outspread wings and both. This is in contrast to the representation of Garuḍa as found in early Indian art. The intermediate stage in the evolution of the hybrid Garuḍa figure of the mediaeval Indian art from those of early forms can be traced with the help of the Gupta coins,[195] as has been asserted earlier. Vincent Smith has suggested that the Garuḍa of the standard was copied from the Roman eagle,[196] but Allan has rightly observed that there is no reason for this suggestion and the resemblance is quite a coincidence, and the *Garuḍadhvajas* were common objects in India.[197] The *Śrītatvanidhī* and the *Śilparatna* as quoted by Rao, describe a two-armed image of Garuḍa, but the latter text also refers to another variety of Garutmān, which is endowed with eight arms, the hands holding such objects as a water-vessel, a mace, a conch-shell, a discus, a sword and a snake, the feet of his rider Viṣṇu Kṛṣṇa resting on the two front hands, the two-armed image of Garuḍa is designated as Tārkṣya in the *Silparatna*.[198] The *Agni Purāṇā*[199] describes the images of

Trailokyamohana and Tārkṣya as eight armed, with *Cakra*, *Khaḍga*, *mūsala* and *aṅkusa* in the right hand *Śaṅkha*, *Sarnga*, *Gadā* and *Pāśa* in the left. Lakṣmī and Sarasvatī holding *padma* and *viṇā* are to be placed on either side of this type of image. The *Viṣṇudharmottara*[200] enjoins that Tārkṣya should have a noose like the beak of a bird, four-arms, a face with round eyes, the breast, knee and legs like those of a vulture, and two wings, his back hands should hold an umbrella and a jar (full of nectar), and his front hands should be in the *añjali*' pose. When his lord is riding on him, the back hands of Garuḍa (Tārkṣya as he is named here) instead of holding on umbrella and an ambrosia pot support the legs of his master, he should be shown slightly pot-bellied (*Kincitlambodara*) and should be decorated with all ornaments. The extent images of Garuḍa of the mediaeval period can be broadly divided into two classes—one that which shows him as Viṣṇu's mount and the other where the birdman serves as the capital of a column, or is placed in front of a Vaisṇava shrine. In both, the mount and emblem of Viṣṇu is depicted as a round-eyed human being with the wings of a bird and a beak-like nose, and sometimes legs with the claws of a bird. He is usually two-armed, his hands being in the *añjali* pose.[201] The images of Garuḍa as shown on the coins of the Guptas are not in conformity with the description laid down in the *Śilparatna* and the *Śrītatvanidhi* because they represent the very developed motif of Garuḍa, The Garuḍa image as described in the *Viṣṇudharmottara* is in conformity to the representation of Garuḍa on the Gupta coins to a good extent. Of course, Garuḍa on the coins issued by the Gupta kings does not have all features as listed in the above noted text, but the iconic representation of Garuḍa is the result of best attempts on the part of the Gupta mint-masters to portray Garuḍa in accordance with the instructions laid down in the texts on iconography. Just because the Gupta age is the beginning of the Brāhmaṇical revival, it may not have been possible or within the knowledge of the mint-masters to portray Garuḍa in all his postures and with all the features. The iconographic representation of Garuḍa on both the obverse and the reverse of coins represented the best of tributes the Gupta kings could have paid to their supreme god.

Kārttikeya : (Pl. XXXVIc)

India, under the imperial aegis of Kumāragupta I (414-455 A.D.), witnessed tremendous numismatic activities. This included both revival of the old types and introduction of new types, including the Kārttikeya type. The mintmasters were anxious to show their skill by introducing more and more variations and types both in gold and silver coinage. It is known that Kumāragupta I was named after Kumāra, the Commander-in-Chief of the gods' army and, therefore, he was named as Kumāragupta. Though we do hardly notice any change in the iconographic representation of Kārttikeya we notice that king Kumāragupta I is represented as feeding grapes to peacock, which was the mount of Lord Kumāra. This is entirely a new dimension added to the

iconographic portraiture of Lord Kārttikeya, who presided over the sovereignty of the Gupta empire during the times of Kumāragupta I. It is, therefore, natural that a new type should have been introduced showing this deity on the reverse, the king on the obverse being represented as feeding the peacock. the mount of the deity.[202] The Kārttikeya type, obviously ad innovation of the emperor, was intended to pay homage to that deity.[203]

On the obverse of this type, we see the king feeding a peacock, the mount of Kārttikeya, whose figure appears on the reverse. It indicates that the king was a staunch devotee of Skanda-Kārttikeya, by whose grace he was born. Out of respect for the deity, he was selected as a reverse motif for a coin type, a rare respect that goes to a god.

Kārttikeya appears nimbate, riding a peacock, holding spear (*Śakti*) in the left hand resting on his shoulder and apparently scattering something by his right hand over an indistinct object before him. The peacock is perched upon a kind of platform.[204]

Smith had doubted the identity of the figure on the reverse with Kārttikeya on the ground that the breasts of the figure are prominent and it may be female.[205] But the peacock which has been established as the mount of Kārttikeya is there and the *Śakti* (spear) his emblem par-excellence also makes its appearance. The identity of the god under reference is, therefore, beyond all doubts. The depiction of Kārttikeya as scattering something unknown on an indistinct object before him may be explained as an act of showering gift on the Gupta empire.

But this was not all. The method of depicting Kārttikeya is different from that found on the Yaudheya coins. On the Gupta coins we find the goddess standing to left in the lotus plant holding lotus with long stalk behind her in left hand and feeding, peacock with fruit in right hand. The goddess seated in lotus plant with a lotus with long stalk in one of her hands is in all likelihood Lakṣmī and it is significant because Lakṣmī, the goddess of royal sovereignty herself is feeding peacock with fruit. The goddess of sovereignty herself feeding the peacock is indicative of the cult of Skanda-Kārttikeya having enjoyed the royal patronage. It is, therefore, of great significance that peacock, which is the inalienable mount of Kārttikeya is being fed by Lakṣmī, the goddess who reigned over the prosperity of the Gupta empire. Thus Kārttikeya, who become unimportant, once agatn gained prominence during the reign-period of Kumāragupta I. Kārttikeya was not only anthropomorphically represented on the coins of Kumāragupta I, he was represented theriomorphically also. Peacock standing to front wiih outspread wings and expanded tails has been protrayed on a large number of coins.[206] It has been an old practice in the Indian iconography that the deities were sought to be represented through their mounts. Śiva has been represented by *Nandī*, Viṣṇu by Cakra or Śaṅkha etc. Similarly there is nothing strange if

the mint-masters showed their respect and devotion to Skanda-Kumāra by seeking to represent him theriomorphically through his mount peacock *Parvāṇī*, who had become the inalienable element for Kārttikeya by the time of the Imperial Guptas. Thus, it was during the time of Kumāragupta I that Kārttikeya figured both therimorphically and anthropomorphically on his coins. This was not the case with the tribal and local coins. The representation of peacock stands in all likelihood for the theriomorphic representation of god Skanda-Kārttikeya.

Gaṅgā : (Pl. XXXI)

The rivers are female divinities, food and life-bestowing mothers, and as such are prominent among the popular divinities represented in the art works of the classic period. They stand at the entrance to the temples in the humble role of door guardians or appear in nitches within the sacred precincts. River goddess is always accompanied by aquatic birds and wild geese. The river goddess rides on a tortoise or a sea-monster or stands on lotuses. In the attitude of sweet repose and benign protection, it becomes difficult to point out difference between the image of a river goddess and that of goddess Śrī-Lakṣmī. It is because we find lotus occasionally in one of the hands of the river goddess. Gaṅgā has been a river on this earth for a long period and it irrigates a vast area of land throughout northern India, thereby helping the tremendous production of food-grains. Gaṅgā water is sacred and a drop of water secures salvation even to the great sinner. Gaṅgā is known as the mother, who both bestows prosperity and secures salvation (*mokṣa*). She represents joy. (in this life) and hope for the life to come.[207] She washes away the sins of one whose ashes or corpse are committed to her waters and secures for him rebirth among the gods in a realm of celestial bliss.[208]

Śiva himself sings a hymn in her praise in the *Purāṇa*.[209] She is the source of redemption. Heaps of sins accumulated by a sinner during millions of births are destroyed by the mere contact of a wind charged with her vapour.[210] As fire consumes fuel, Gaṅgā consumes the sins of the wicked. Sages mount the staired terraces of the Gaṅgā ; on it they transcend the High heaven of Brahmān himself, free from dangers, riding celestial chariots, they go to Śiva's abode.

Gaṅgā is a prototype of all rivers of India. Of course, the description and eulogy of Gaṅgā as quoted above is not all correct and appears to have been written out of emotion, still she is life-giving because she irrigates a vast area of northern India. She is the personification of health and abundance, dignity and prowess.

A rich diadem frames her forehead, a necklace descends to her breasts, he rich ornaments and the chains of her girdle and loin cloth designate her wealth-bestowing virtue.[211] She stands on a sea-monster (*makara*) which serves her as the vehicle.[212] The gentle ripple of the giant stream, as though

its surface were animated by a light breeze, plays over her firm and slender body.[213] Much like a Bengal bride or a happy young housewife, she is intended to procreate new life and rule in the house.

The Imperial Guptas had led India to tremendous economic prosperity, which most likely inspired them to order portraiture of Gaṅgā as early as on the Tiger-slayer type coins of Samudragupta.[214] Gaṅgā is depicted like a female figure standing on a *makara* (an elephant-headed fish), holding a lotus flower.

On the reverse of the Rhinoceros-slayer type coins of Kumāragupta I also,[215] goddess Gaṅgā, not nimbate, appears standing to left on an elephant-headed crocodile, holding lotus with long stalk in its trunk. The right hand of the goddess is extended and the fore-finger is pointing out at some object not visible on the flan. Her left hand, which is empty, is hanging down by the side. Hair on the head of the goddess is tied in a knot behind and she wears ear-rings, necklace, and bangles. Behind the goddess stands a female attendant holding in her right hand an umbrella, without fillet, its staff being denoted by a dotted line ; her left hand is on the waist. The identity of the goddess is a matter of much difficulty. In mythology the fish-like dragon or *makara* is the vehicle of *varuna*, the god of waters. The king's name Samudra means ocean and Smith thinks that it is almost certain that the obverse device on the Tiger-Slayer type coins of Samudragupta idealizes Śamudragupta as Varuṇa while the reverse represents the sea god's consort.[216] The issue of identity was sought to be confused by pointing to the presence of lotus on the coin but it is noteworthy that lotus has never been the exclusive attribute of goddess Lakṣmī. Besides the issue was laid to rest by the contention of John Allan[217] that the figure on the reverse may be goddess Lakṣmī and the *makara* points to a river-goddess, which can be best identified as Gaṅgā whose vehicle is the *makara*. Thus Gaṅgā, the river-goddess, was portrayed on the Gupta coinage. The galaxy of Brahamanical deities constitutes the favourite objects of portrayal by the Gupta mint-masters. Soon Gaṅgā began to make her appearance in the temples of the Guptas which can be seen at Bhumrā and at Deogarh.[218]

Triśūla

As it has been earlier indicated, the age of the Imperial Guptas was marked by religious toleration. This is amply testified by the portraiture of the Śaivite symbols on the Gupta coinage. In comparison with the Vaiṣṇava motifs, those pertaining to Śaivism are indeed, very few.[219] On the reverse of coin no. 20 Plate XVII, in A.S. Altekar's 'The Coinage of the Gupta Empire', we find a trident with two ornamental loops below prongs on either side. Only one coin of this type has been found and its weight has not been recorded.[220] The coin according to Altekar,[221] is undoubtedly an issue of Kumāragupta I. The trident on the reverse is quite distinct and it is much more elaborate than that on the so called Valabhī coins[222]. Allan thinks that

the reverse of this type (type IV) was really Garuḍa, which on some coins does resemble a trident and conjectures that this resemblance was considerably accentuated by the draughtsman, who drew the figure.[223]

Altekar concedes that there is no doubt that Garuḍa when rudely executed does bear some resemblance to a small trident (cf. XVI, 3; XVII, 17) and this resemblance is accentuated and the trident begins to appear to be having ornamental loops also if the letters 'Gupta Mahendra' are just above the bird; this can be clearly seen from a coin.[224] Altekar has asserted that the reverse motif is Triśūla, which was the aniconic representation of Śiva.

Vṛṣabha

The first new type of coin of Skandagupta consists of a small series of coins of very base metal having the usual bust on the obverse but without traces of the Greek legend. The reverse type is a bull, presumably Śiva's bull *Nandī*, couchant to right[225]. It has been suggested that these coins are attributed to valabhī because the bull is the badge of later Senāpatis of Valabhī. Although this is not a conclusive evidence in itself, it seems to be corroborated by the evidence of provenance.[226] Nandin, Nandīśvara or Adhikāranandīn are some of the various names by which the Śiva's bull came to be described in the epic and the Purāṇic texts.[227] When these designations came to be attributed to him, he was conceived more as one of Śiva's attendants than his mount and unlike Garuḍa he was fully anthropomorphised though hybridity in his representation was not unknown.[228] Bull was originally the theriomorphic form of Śiva and numismatic and literary data appear to support this suggestion.[229] Vṛṣabha was at first an attributive epithet of several of the Vedic divinities including Rudra but it came to denote Śiva specially in the post-Vedic age.[230] The idea about the bull being the mount of the god appears to have originated before the 1st Century B.C. or first Century A.D., the coins of Ujjayaini and those of Wema-Kadphises prove it.[231] The process of anthropomorphising the mount began, however, in the early centuries of the Christian era, and that it was an accomplished fact by the Gupta period can be substantiated by Kālidāsa's description of Nandin.[232] He is described there as keeping guard over the entrance door to Śiva's abode at Kailāśa with a golden staff resting against his left fore-arm, and silencing the Gaṇas with a finger of his right hand placed on his mouth.[233] But the recumbent bull on the reverse of Skandagupta's coin stands for the theriomorphic representation of Śiva because we do not find any trace of temple or staff on the basis of which we can say that it is his attendant Nandī. It is in all likelihood Nandi, the bull mount of Lord Śiva. We do not know why Lord Śiva was not portrayed in his anthropomorphic aspect on the Gupta coins.

Kalaśa

Vase is one of the important Vaiṣṇavite symbols, which occurs on the

coins issued by the Imperial Gupta kings. On the reverse of a gold coin issued by Candragupta II,[334] a vase (*Kalaśa*) is depicted with flowers, which hang down the sides of the pots. On some of the coins of the emperor Kumāra-gupta I, the flower vase with flowers hanging down its side is visible.[235] The vase was not probably a religious symbol.[236] But even now we find a practice in modern Hindu society of a vase full of water being placed on the spot, where some auspicious function is being held. The concept of *maṅgala ghaṭa* had not died out even now. It is in this background that we should see the vase-symbol. The decorated vase with linear marks is placed to mark the beginning of a religious or an auspicious function. The portraiture of the *Kalaśa* indicates the auspicious nature of the *ghaṭa*.

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3. *Ibid*. p. 12.
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13. *Ibid*, p. 589.
14. It is said that the reverse devices of all the Gupta coins, gold silver and copper were in every case (except the Javeline type of Candragupta) undoubtedly selected as being mythological symbols.
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16. Mackay, E., *Early Indus Civilisation*, p. 53. Pl. XVI 2.
17. *Ibid*, pp. 53-54.
18. *Ibid*, Chap. XVIII, Marshall, J., M.IC, p. 52 (cf.) a terracotta relief of early Gupta period from Bhita which shows a similar female figure in much the same posture but with a lotus issuing from her neck, instead of from her womb. (ASIAR, 1911-12, Pl. XXIII, 40).
19. Marshall, *op.cit.*, p. 62.
20. *Ibid*, pp. 62-63.
21. *ASIAR*, 1906-7, pp, 122.23, fig. 4.
22. *Ibid*, p. 123.
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24. Munshi K. M., *Saga of Indian Sculpture*, p. 5.
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27. *JBRS*, XXXVII, p. 178 ff.
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36. *R.V.*, 2. 32, 7, 5.42.12.
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42. *R.V.*, 1.87.6 Sriyase Kambhanubhih Sam miniskere, the Maruts wish to sprinkle rain water with shining rays of the Sun.
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45. *Śatpatha Brahmana* XI, 4, I, ff.
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48. *Taittiriya Āraṇyaka*, X, 46.
49. *Vājsaneyī*, XXXI, 1.
50. *Śrī-Sūkta*, X, 11, 14.
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52. Coomaraswamy, A.K., The Eastern Art, I, p. 178.
53. R.V., *Khilani*, 11, 6, 5.
54. *Ibid.*, V. 6.
55. *Mbh.*, 1, 110, 111.
56. *Mbh*, 1, 61, 44, 67, 156.
57. *Mbh*, 11, 10, 19.
58. *Mbh*, 111, 168, 3.
59. *Ram*, V, 7, 14.
60. *Mbh*, XII, 83, 45.
61. Banerjea, *op.cit.*, p. 372.
62. *Milindapanha*, 191.
63. *Jataka*, no. 392.
64. *Ibid*, no. 535.
65. *Dhammapada Aṭṭhakatha*, ii, 17.
66. *Kalpasutra*, 36.
67. *Raghuvamsa*, IV, 5.
68. *Abhitasit*, 3/1/838.
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74. *Ibid*, 374.
75. *Ibid*, pp 373-74.

76. Banerjea, *op.cit.*, p. 373.
77. *Ibid*, p. 373.
78. *Ibid*, p. 373. Haravali as quoted in *Śabdakalpadruma*.
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80. Banerjea, *op.cit.*, p. 373.
81. *Ibid*, p. 373.
82. Coomaraswamy, A.K., *op.cit.*, p. 178.
83. *Ibid*, p. 178.
84. For details see Chapter II in this thesis.
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88. *Ibid*, p. 48.
89. Altekar, A.S., *Catalogue of the Gupta Gold Coins in the Bayana Hoard*, Pl. XXXVI, 44, Battle—Axe type, Pl XXXVI, Archer type, Pl. XXXVI, 49, Pl. XXXVI, 46.
90. *JNSI*, XIV, p. 69, Pl. VI, 13-14.
91. *JNSI*, XV, p. 80 Reg. No. 10564, Pl. III.1, 3.
92. *Ibid*, XIV, p. 70, Pl. VI, 12.
93. *Ibid*, Pl. VI, 13-14.
94. *JNSI*, XII, p. 125, Pl. X.7, Rev.
95. Altekar, A.S , *C.G.G.C. in the Bayana Hoard*, Pl. XXVI, 51.
96. *Ibid*, Pl. XXXVI, 52; Pl. XVIII, 11 : The goddess appears seated facing to left on a lotus-covered backless throne, whose legs are visible. She holds a lotus with long stalk in right hand. The left hand hangs by the side and rests on the couch. Right leg of the goddess is raised upon the couch and the left leg is hanging down. Pl. XXXVII, 55; Pl. XVIII.14. Cakravikrama type. Pl. XXXVII, 56. Archer type of Kumāra Gupta I, Pl. XXXVII 61, Swordsman type, Pl. XXXVII, 67; Elephant-Rider type. Goddess both standing on lotus and her right hand holds a lotus creeper with buds and flowers and left hand rests on waist holding a cornucopiae; *JNSI*, XI, *C.C.G.D. in the British Museum*, p. 63, Pls. XII, 6,15, XIII, 1, Kumāragupta I.
97. Allan, J.; C.C.G.D. in the British Museum, p. 88, Pl. XV, 16, *JNSI*, XXII, p. 182. Pl. IX.4. Here the goddess is nimbate, standing on lotus facing front, wearing transparent drapery and jewellery tiara, ear-ring, necklace, armlets, bracelets and with an oura, the end of which fall on either side; right hand bent and holding lotus plant with buds and plants, left hand on waist holding full blown lotus, couch lying near right foot. *JNSI*, X, p. 106. Archer type coin *JNSI*, IX, p. 34, Pl. III,2 ; Horseman type gold coin of Candragupta II.
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171. *Yo-ayam Kālakhya Cakrasya Prerakah Puroso abyayah. Yugacakrasya Netarmeneva Vidurbudhah* ; *Evam mahārsayop vahurjagachchakram pravartakam.*
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173. *Evam Bhute Mahācakre Catuh Sastavara Saṁyute Nemidviyanvite Devam madhye dhyāyasva Bhūpate* : 42.66.
174. Altekar, A.S., *op.cit.*, p. 148.
175. *Ibid*, pp. 148-09. It may however, be pointed out that Sudarśanapuruṣa or Cakrapuruṣa as described in the Silparatna is considerably different. He is to have a grim appearance, matted hair, eight or sixteen hands and is to be surrounded by a circle (T.A.G. Rao ; *Hindu Iconography*, Vol. I, p. 291). This conception is probably a later one and related to *Nṛsiṁhāvatāra*.
176. *Ahirbudhnya Saṁhitā*, 35-36.
177. Banerjea, J.N., *op.cit.*, p. 537.
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203. Altekar, A.S., *op.cit.*, p. 203.
204. *Ibid*, p. 205, Pl. XXIV, 60; *JNSI*, XI, p. 55; Allan, J., *op.cit.*, p. 84. Pl. XV, 5; on this coin *Parvāṇī* is sprinkling incense on altar on right ?
205. Cited by Altekar, *The Coinage of the Gupta Empire*, p. 204.
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207. Zimmer, H.R., *Myths and Symbols in Indian Art and Civilisation*, pp. 109-10.
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210. *Ibid*, pp. 109-10.
211. *Ibid*, p. 111.
212. *Ibid*, p. 111. Gaṅgā is mentioned in the Vedas also. Macdonell, A.A. *The Vedic Mythology*, p. 86.
213. *Ibid*, p. 111.
214. Allan, J., *op.cit.*, p. LXXIV.
215. Altekar, A.S., *op.cit.*, p. 198. Pl. XXIV, 63 ; *JNSI*, XVII, p. 105; Pl. IX.5. The female attendant holding umbrella (Chattra) does not always accompany Gaṅgā which is clear from the description of the Tiger-Slayer type coin of Samudragupta.
216. *JRAS*, XXI, N.S. p. 17.
217. *Gupta Coins, British Museum*, p. LXXIV.
218. Saletore, R.N., *op.cit.*, p. 540.
The Besnagar Gaṅgā stands in a very graceful pose on the back of a *makara*, a mythical crocodile with legs crossed (?) the Vidgala as described in the Viṣṇudharmottara; her right elbow rests on the shoulder of an attendant, and a male figure on the left corner is striking a blow to the snout of animal (this may be Bhagīratha goading it to move swiftly (Banerjea, J.N., *DHI*, p. 354, Pl. XV.4).
219. Saletore, R.N., *Life in the Gupta Age*, p. 539.
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6

Development of Cult on the Basis of the History of Coinage

The term iconography is a result of the synthesis of icon (Greek eikon) and graphy. This term icon means a figure, which represents a deity or a saint in mosaic, sculpture and painting, etc., meant for worship. This may be in some way or other associated with the worship of different divinities.[1] These icons, according to Banerjea, are described as the very body or *tanu* of divinities in the early Indian texts. There have been many stage in the representations of these images. These representations were not a sudden and overnight development. Of course, iconism was preceded by the anico-nism; but the symbolic representation of the religious ideas of the people marked the first stage in the development of iconography. The representation of the various symbols may be interpreted as the solid manifestation of man's religious beliefs. It is this study of the icons of different deities, which is known to be covered by the subject of iconography. It is not simply con-cerned with the study and interpretation of the various characteristics of the deity but also with the delineation of the special features and understanding of the true significance of the figure sculptures, frescoes, etc. Iconography is, therefore, concerned more with the interpretative aspect of the images.

The history of making images of the deities is late. There are, how-ever, references in the *Ṛg-veda* to a priest offering the image of Indra for sale. Had the images of the deities not been manufactured, how could have the priest offered the image of god Indra for sale ? But the literary references to the manufacture of the images remain unsubstantiated till a very late histori-cal period. The images alone do not substantiate the references of the image-making in our country. The coins on the other hand are such evidences, which are like running commentaries on the development of iconography in India, particularly in respect of the Brāhmaṇical deities. These coins are not

simply positive evidences of tremendous growth of commerical activities; but they also represent the period or phases that mark the gradual development of iconography. The images in the proper sense of the term do not give such clear picture of the phases that mark the evolution of iconography. For example. the images of the sun-god (Sūrya) in the north Indian variety do not narrate the story as to how and when the anthropomorphic form of the north-Indian variety of Sun-god (Sūrya) came into being and was finally represented. But a close scrutiny of the system of the Indian coinage presents before us the different stages, namely the symbolic, or aniconic, theriomorphic and anthropomorphic. The sun was represented variously on early Indian coins by rayed-disc, six-armed symbol and wheel, etc. That the wheel represented Sūrya is amply borne out by the fact that Sūrya himself was identical with Nārāyaṇa in the Vedic literature. Viṣṇu had not his separate entity in the *Ṛgveda*. Therefore, the wheel was the aniconic representation of Sūrya. Likewise, the lotus was the symbolic representation of Sūrya. The lotus was linked with the sun because the blossoming and fading of the lotus timed with the rising and setting of the sun. The lotus is represented on the early Indian coins including the punch-marked coins with one or many petals. It is justifiably presumed that such a story based on gradual evolution of the iconography as we notice on the early-Indian coinage cannot be gleaned from the images of the sun-god.

J. N. Banerjea has rightly suggested that the figures of the gods and the goddesses found on the coins of particular localities would indicate the manner of their representation in vogue in different places.[2] Similarly, the coins which belong to different periods would furnish us the mode of representation of the divinities in different times. The fact that the images of the deities in so early a period are to be hardly found out can also be brushed aside. In that case, coins of the early period alone have to be depended upon for tracing the develodment of iconography. The numismatic representation of the deities alone give us an idea about the early stages in the evolution of the image-making. It remains a substantial fact that the symbols and the devices appearing on the early Indian coins fully corroborate the conclusion already arrived at with the help of textual and monumental evidences with regard to the earlier aniconic tradition of a large section of Indians.[3] Even after the image-making had become popular, the mint-masters had not abandoned the idea of depicting gods and goddesses on the coins. The portraiture of the deities on the coins are sometimes based on actual sculptural representations. Where the numismatic representation and its sculptural counterpart are extant, we do not fail to find a close parallelism. Thus, the figure of the Buddha belonging to the 1st Century A.D. is well represented in the plastic form among the Gāndhāra sculptures. When we compare it with the numismatic representation appearing on the coins of Kaniṣka and clearly described by the Kuṣāṇa die-cutter as Śākyamuni Buddha, we are struck by the great similarity between the two.

About the devices appearing on the early indigenous coins, it is said that they throw a flood of light on the problem of the symbolic representations of gods and goddesses.[4] It is in the light of the observations made above by Banerjea that the symbols and devices that make their appearance on the early Indian indigenous coins have to be explained. It also appears logical that the symbols must have some significance, religious or otherwise to the people. The utility of an object also led the mint-masters to depict it on the coins and in course of time the object, which had some utility to the life of the people, became associated with their religious faiths and beliefs.

In the chapter dealing with the symbols on the punch-marked and cast coins, the date-palm tree has been shown to be depicted on a coin hailing from Rājgīr.[5] Now, we find that the date-palm trees are even now found in a large number from the area yielding the coins. In that case it may indicate the vegetation and it may also show that during the days of scarcity the date palm leaves and fruits constituted the main diet of the people and the animals. The development of image-making is the result of a long and gradual process, which has passed through the stages as mentioned earlier. The literature, including the *Atharvaveda*, deal with the symbols and how they are related with the religious beliefs of mankind. These early Vedic literature also deal with the early Indian iconography and in the *tantras* they are described as the object of devotion, which helps one to achieve his desires. These symbols figure on the coins, which have been sought to be explained as having affiliation with different cults. Some have said that these symbols are Buddhist in character but it was not beyond doubt. Durga Prasad opined that these symb ols are tāntrik in character, and if compared they resemble in shape to many of the symbols found described in the *Kālīvilāsatantra*. But the *Kālīvilāsatantra* is a late mediaeval text of the 15th Century A.D. which cannot be depended upon solely. It would be an act of injustice if we seek to compare the symbols appearing on the punch-marked coins and other early Indian coins with the symbols or *mudrās* described in a Sanskrit text of relatively much later date. If the significance of the symbols have to be studied exactly, efforts will have to be made to trace the rites and usages, conventions and traditions of the people for whose use these coins were meant. The time gap betwen the early Indian coinage and the *Kālivilāsatantra* have been sought to be dangerously neglected by Durga Prasad.[6] J.N. Banerjea has his own views about the symbols when he says that all of them seem to be Brāhmaṇical in character.[7] This also is not above doubt. It may be reasonably asserted that the primitive man had a common treasure of the symbols, from which every faith or cult drew the symbols. For example, the trident symbol on the early indigenous coinage has been subjected to varied interpretations. Some attribute the trident to Buddhism and say that it stands for the *triratna* of Buddhism. But the most universally accepted view is that the trident was the emblem par-excellence of Lord Śiva. This becomes clear from the study of the Kuṣāṇa coinage where we find Śiva depicted clearly with trident as his

inalienable insignia.[8] So in the early period of history, when the iconic conception of any particular deity had not emerged fully, it may not be possible for the student of iconography to ascertain the exact significance of the symbolis appearing on these coins. A thorough study of the Indian coinage from beginning to at least the Gupta period, when the iconic concept of the deities like Viṣṇu, Śiva, Śakti, Sūrya, Gaṇapati had finally emerged, alone can help us in tracing the development of iconography from infancy to its maturity.

The coins of the early period depict on their faces a number of trees and objects. The devotion of mankind to the trees and the objects of nature is based on his belief in the concept of animism. The symbols appearing on the early Indian coins, which are natural, terrestrial, etc., are the first chapter in the history of Iconography. It will not be out of place to quote J.N. Banerjea, who said that 'iconography is nothing but the interpretative aspect of the religious art of a country, which becomes manifest in diverse ways. Iconography, therefore, is the interpretation of the religious art of a man.' The study of the devices and symbols on the early Indian indigenous coins (the punch-marked, the cast, the tribal and the local coins of India) and the theriomorphic and the anthropomorphic representations of the deities, indicates the trend and tendency towards the development of iconism and thus helps to substantiate the descriptions found in the texts on iconography. The coinage furnishes us with a commentary on the religious myths of the people through their aniconic and iconic manifestations since very early times.[9]

B. Chattopadhyay rightly asserts that localisation of the coin types on the basis of proper identification of the provenance of coins attribution of the coins to the appropriate issuing authority and assignment of suitable date for them indicate, no doubt, some hitherto unknown landmarks in the development of iconography.[10] The aniconic tradition may be traced in the representation of phallus, trees, serpents, etc. found on some seals discovered from the Indus valley sites. Even now, we find that every village had a tree which is held sacred and venerated annually. Tulasī plant is regarded as the abode of Viṣṇu. Phallus and serpents became associated with Śiva in the later part of history. The animal motifs which include the elephant, the bull, the lion, etc., are noticed on the coins. The coins bearing the above noted animal motifs remind us of the seals and sealings discovered from Harappā, which also have similar figures. What is worthy of note is the fact that some of the animals on the coinage find place in the Maurya, Śūṅga and Kuṣāṇa art of Bhārhut, Mathurā and Sāñcī.

The symbols on the punch-marked coins appear to have been in use right from the sixth century B.C. down to the Kuṣāṇa period. The lotus of the early coinage, which was an attribute of the sun-god in the early period, changed to become the attribute of Lakṣmī, the goddess of splendour and fortune. It is notable that the lotus was an attribute and seat of Lakṣmī and

an attribute of Sūrya as well. Lotus became associated with Lakṣmī only after she entered the Vaiṣṇava pantheon during the Gupta period.[11] The lotus, therefore, had association with both Lakṣmī and Sūrya as well.

The tribal and the local coins of ancient India mark another stage in the development of iconography. Although the practice of representing the deities aniconically continued during the third-second century B.C. to 2nd Century A.D., anthropomorphic representations of the deities also could be noticed on the coins. The tribal and the local coins are many in number and they bear the deities belonging to the Brāhmaṇical pantheon. Lakṣmī, Śiva, Indra, Agni, Viṣṇu, Sūrya, etc., are the deities appearing anthropomorphically on the early coins of north India. Śiva appears on the coins of the Kunindas, with deer in his Paśupatinātha aspect.[12] That the deer was associated with Śiva is amply demonstrated by the seals discovered from the Indus Valley sites, where a three-horned deity is depicted as a Yogī. Among the various animals that surround the deity, the deer is one. J. N. Banerjea has said that the deer stands for the theriomoprhic representation of Lakṣmī because deer is swift moving and so is the goddess of fortune and splendour. She is described as Cancalā (fickle) in literature. Further, there occurs the legend *Bhāgavata Chatreśvara Mahātmanah*. That Śiva was Chatradhārī and Māhātmā also is proved beyond doubt. In Gujarata, there is a '*Soma Cult*', where the deer is described as playing in the lap of moon, which adorns the forehead Śiva and, therefore, it is known as Mṛgāṅka. The deer is, therefore, associated with Śiva in all likelihood. But prior to the coins of the Kunindas, Śiva appears in the anthropomorphic form for the first time on the coins hailing from Ujjayini. It is known that Ujjain was a place of Śiva worship since very early times of history. The famous temple of Śiva-Mahākāla also was situated in Ujjain. From all accounts, it seems that Ujjain had been a centre of Śiva-worship. It was, therefore, in the fitness of things that the coins hailing from Ujjayini depict Śiva in his anthropomorphic form being attended by Nandī, his bull-mount on the door.

Similarly, Lakṣmī, the goddess of fortune and plenty, was also depicted anthropomorphically on the local coins hailing from Ayodhyā, Pāñcāla and Mathurā. While the coins from Ayodhyā and Pāñcāla depict Lakṣmī in the act of being sprinkled by two elephants on both her sides in her Gaja aspect, the coins from Mathurā depict the goddess holding a lotus flower in her uplifted right hand.[13] Lakṣmī, with lotus in one of her hands, is known as Padmahastā in Indian literature. We see how lotus, which used to represent Sūrya aniconically, became the attribute of Lakṣmī in her aspect of showering plenty. The association of lotus with Sūrya and Lakṣmī both is justifiable. It is because while on the one hand the blossoming and the fading of lotus is timed with the rise and the setting of the sun, on the other the lotus represents the life-giving source as it grows out of mire and water. And water is the source of fertility to the soil and Lakṣmī also is one, who showers plenty on her worshippers; hence, the association.

On the coins of Agnimitra of Pāñcāla, Agni (the firegod) is represented anthropomorphically with flames rising from his shoulder.[14] Sculptural and literary evidences are sometimes so meagre that the coins have to be solely depended upon for the contemporary iconographic representations. Similarly, the emblems of the deities, which represented the deities aniconically, became associated as their attributes. The development of iconography can be traced in gradual stages. The tribal and the local coins of northern India depict a number of symbols either in association with a deity or without any such association. It has been already said that these symbols convey certain meanings, which are of use to the students of comparative religion and iconography. In such an early period, when the rites and practices of the people, for whom these coins were issued, is difficult to be traced. Any suggestion about the religious significance of these coins may prove to be absolutely conjectural. But it is a fact that these symbols have definite religious association, which may throw welcome light in tracing the development of iconography in India. The three-arched crescented hill, the trident, etc. which are Śaivite in character, became the permanent abode and inalienable emblem of Śiva in the later part of history. The devotion to and veneration of the symbol, therefore, actually represent the first chapter in the development of iconography.

Sometimes the coins prove to be of tremendous significance not only for the study of iconography but also for the study of political history as in the case of the Indo-Greeks. The literary materials for the study of the dynastic history of the Indo-Greeks was almost negligible till the coins issued by them came to the notice of the numismatists. The Indo-Greeks would have remained unknown to the history of India if their coins had not revealed their chronological genealogy. But they are also of significance for the study of the iconography of the Greek deities. India, particularly the north-west, had to receive a large number of foreign deities along with the foreign invaders. The coins of the Indo-Greeks depict on their faces a galaxy of deities belonging to the Hellenic religion. Although efforts to trace the iconographic evolution and development of these deities would be fruitless, yet they present before us a first hand account of the iconography of the Greek deities, on the basis of which their iconographic features and traits can be reconstructed. The depiction of the deities belonging to the Hellenic pantheon on the Indo-Greek coinage was most probably intended to popularise the Hellenic cult with the Indian population, in which they succeeded to an extent. If the features and attributes of the deities as represented on the coins are compared with that found in the Greek mythology, the classics, the epics of Homer, etc., we are struck with striking similarity. Further, the Greek deities have a number of similarities with their Indian counterparts. For example, Zeus, who has the role of Indra in Greek religion, has thunderbolt as his emblem par-excellence and so is Indra. Hephaistos is similarly to be identified with the Indian divine-architect Viśvakarmā. The hammer fortunately is the object commonly held by the two deities. Ardoksha is another Greek deity,

who is described by Homer as one who showers fortune on her worshipper. She is equated with Lakṣmī, who also plays the role of Ardoksho. Both have cornucopiae as their common object. In fact, the cornucopiae in the hands of Lakṣmī on the early Imperial Gupta coinage is enough to prove some kind of Hellenic influence on the iconography of Lakṣmī. Cornucopiae is the horn of plenty and it is, therefore, the most fitting attribute of the Greek goddess of fortune. The Hellenic deities depicted on the Indo-Greek coinage, therefore, resemble in features and shapes to what is there in the Greek Classics on religion and mythology. It is in the light of the observations placed above that the significance of the Indo-Greek coinage for the iconographic study of the Hellenic deities is to be understood. Therefore, the theory that the Greek occupation of India was an isolated and temporary phase is hardly tenable in view of the fact that they had a definite imprint on the religion and iconography of Indian deities inasmuch as they influenced the portrayal of Lakṣmī. The iconic representations of the Hellenic deities on the Indo-Greek coinage confirm the descriptions laid in the Greek classics and mythologies to a greater extent. It is a great help in reconstructing the iconography of the Hellenic deities.

The Śaka and the Kuṣāṇa coinages are of much importance to the student of iconography. These coins depict on their reverse varied figures of deities, belonging to the Brāhmaṇical (Hindu and Buddhist), Hellenic and Zoroastrian pantheons. It is for the first time that the Buddha was depicted anthropomorphically on the coins of Kaniṣka, with his right hand raised up to the height of chest in the act of preaching or blessing. The left hand holds a begging bowl in some cases. Sculptural representations of the Buddha in the Gāndhāra and the Mathurā schools of art fortunately confirm the numismatic representations of the Buddha in the anthropomorphic form. The literary data on the portrayal of the Buddha in human form is not available upto the Kuṣāṇa period and the numismatic and the Sculptural representations of the Buddha in tho anthropomorphic form may alone be depended upon to confirm each other. It was because the depiction of the master in human form could become possible only after the birth of Mahāyānism, which contemplated the Buddha as the transcendental to whom anyone ran for blessings directly. The supreme transcendental alone can be depicted in the human form. The Kuṣāṇa coinage is, therefore, revolutionary in this sense. The Śaka and the Kuṣāṇa kings were liberal in the sense that their coinages depict a galaxy of deities belonging to Brāhmaṇism, Buddhism, Hellenism and Zorastrianism. Among the Brāhmaṇical deities, Skanda-Kārttikeya is very important whose their names Skanda-Kumāra, Viśākha and Mahāsena appear on the same coin, probably indicating that the three names were used for the one and the same deity. The figure of Skanda-Kārttikeya on the Kuṣāṇa coinage resembles closely with the description laid down in the early texts on iconography. Further, no noteworthy departure is noticed in the representation of Skanda-Kārttikeya on coins issued by the Kuṣāṇas, on the

basis of which it may be presumed that the numismatic representation of Skanda-Kārttikeya continued to be as it was on the coins of the Yaudheyas. On the coins of the Yaudheyas, the six-heads of Skanda-Kārttikeya were not clearly noticeable, whereas on the Kuṣāṇa coins, the six-heads of the god can be clearly noticed. The period of the Kuṣāṇa kings represents a high and developed stage in the evolution of iconography. The depiction of Mother-Goddess in the form of Ambikā seated on a lion can also be noticed on the coins of the Kuṣāṇa period.[15] Although Ambikā was sought to be identified and interpreted variously, there remains the fact that she had the destructive power to drive away the evil forces. The iconography of Śiva acquires a new orientation during the Śaka-Kuṣāṇa period. Because the hands and heads of Śiva not only multiply rather varied attributes including *Damaru*, tiger-skin, *Kamaṇḍalu* etc. are placed in his various hands. Śiva was further portrayed on the Śaka and Kuṣāṇa coins in his varied and fully developed form with trident. Here, the trident is depicted as the universally accepted emblem of Lord Śiva. Elsewhere, the bull mount Nandī is depicted in the act of gazing at Lord Śiva. This definitely helps us in tracing the iconic development of numerous deities. Further, the Śaka and the Kuṣāṇa coins depict a number of deities belonging to the Zoroastrian and the Hellenic cults, which if compared resemble closely the descriptions laid down in the classical and religious literature of these particular cults. These deities have been dealt with in detail in the chapter on the Śaka and the Kuṣāṇa coinages. The Kuṣāṇa coins, therefore, represent a landmark in the development of iconography because the icons on the coins are much developed from the iconographic point of view. Among the Greek and the Persian divinities that make their appearance on the Śaka and the Kuṣāṇa coinages, important are Artemis, Athena, Demeter, Hekate, Apollo, Helios, Dioskuroi, Salene, Hephaistos, Herakles, Poseidon, Ahurmazda, Ardvisksho, Athso, Mao, Manaobago, Mihira, Nana, Oaninda, Oado, Orlagno, Pharro, etc. The study of the Kuṣāṇa coinage is, therefore, of much value from the iconographic point of view inasmuch as their imprint on the Indian image making on the coins may be clearly traced.

The reign period of the Imperial Guptas was important from several points of view. The Gupta period of the Indian history is marked with the final emergence of Brāhmaṇism and with this we can notice the practice of the sacrifices, (Aśvamedha, Vājapeya Rājsūya, etc.) during the Gupta period. Brāhmaṇical religion enjoyed state patronage and it was, therefore, natural that the coins bear on them the imprint of the state religion to prove the genuineness and purity of the metal. One of the most striking features of the Gupta numismatics was the practice of issuing coins which was intended to commemorate the Aśvamedha sacrifice. The Aśvamedha type of coins in gold was issued by Samudragupta as well as by his grandson Kumārgupta I. Indian literature contain references where a king is called Cakravartin after performing the Aśvamedha sacrifice. The successful performance of the Aśvamedha

sacrifice announces broadly that the particular king has defeated all rival kings and his sovereignty is unchallenged. The horse on the obverse looks noble and graceful and seems to be resigned to its impending kingdom. The revival of the practice of performing Aśvamedha sacrifice indicates the Brāhmaṇical religion as a force after a long spell of suppression. The Aśvamedha type coins are the best specimens of the Indian numismatic art and represent the high watermark in the numismatic art of ancient India. The revival of Aśvamedha sacrifice, being commemorated by the coins under reference here, indicates the sway of Brāhmaṇism over the Indian society.

It is remarkable to note that the Imperial Gupta kings had to contend with a number of foreign powers including the Śakas and the Kuṣāṇas. It will not be an exaggeration if it is said that the Gupta kings drove away the last vestiges of the foreign influence. It is a law of nature that there is an intermingling of the influence of the cultures that get together or meet. The Indo Greeks, the Śakas and the Kuṣāṇas, who ruled over a larger tract of north and north-western India for a long span of time had left their imprint on Indian culture, which is manifest in the depiction of Lakṣmī and other Indian deities. In the coins of the early Gupta kings, Lakṣmī is portrayed with cornucopiae in one of her hands with a somewhat foreign look. The cornucopiae is essentially a foreign feature, which is placed as an attribute in the hand of the goddess to indicate her aspect of showering fortunes upon her devotees.

Lakṣmī on early Indian coins is depicted as either seated on a lotus or holding in one of her hands the lotus as her emblem. But this exclusively Indian attribute of the goddess of fortune was relegated in the darkness and replaced by the cornucopiae to be placed in one of the hands of the Indian goddess of fortune. The cornucopiae was properly speaking the legacy of the Greek and other foreign rule, which had already become a thing of the past. The Gupta king Candragupta II issued the Archer type of gold coins. On the reverse of this coin type effort was made to Indianise Lakṣmī by placing her legs on a circular mat or lotus. The lotus and the cornucopiae both were placed in her hands.[16] The foreign influence on the Indian numismatic art could be finally eliminated on the Chatra type of gold coins issued by Candragupta II, where Lakṣmī is seen nimbate, standing three-fourth to left on the lotus and holding the lotus in her left hand [17] It becomes clear how the coinage serves to throw light on the different stages in the development of iconography in India.

It is known that the Gupta period constituted the classical age of Indian history and it marked the peak for the rise of Brāhmaṇical Vaiṣṇava faith. The kings of the Imperial Gupta dynasty are mostly known as the *Paramabhāgavatas* from the legend on coins and inscriptions as well. The glorification and expansion of Vaiṣṇava faith was, therefore, a natural phenomenon. Garuḍa, regarded as the theriomorphic representation of Viṣṇu, was portrayed frequently on the Gupta coins. The *dhvajastambha* on the coins are seen

topped by a Garuḍa. It is known as Garuḍadhvaja.[18] Vaiṣṇavism had become for all practical purposes state religion. Viṣṇu is noticed to have figured in the form of Cakrapuruṣa on the Cakravikrama type of gold coin of Candragupta II. Cakravikrama means one, who has the valour of Cakra. The Cakra (wheel) famous by the name of Sudarśana Cakra is held by Viṣṇu. The Cakravikrama type coins depict a male figure as granting *prasāda* in the form of three circular objects to the king, representing *prabhuśakti*, *mantraśakti* and *uṭśāhaśakti*. India has had a long tradition of worshipping the *Āyudhapuruṣas*. These *Āyudhapuruṣas* are considered to be the representative of the god himself.

Śiva was not completely neglected. The coins of Lakṣmī and bull type issued by Skandagupta depict a bull, which has been known in the history of India to stand for the theriomorphic representation or Śiva. Śiva did not find favour with the kings of the Gupta dynasty because they were not inclined to him.

Kumāragupta I (Circa 413-454 A.D.) was the only Gupta monarch, who is known to have issued the coins with Skanda-Kārttikeya. Kumāragupta I is known to have been born by the grace of god Kumāra and the coins of Kārttikeya type are probably intended to commemorate the devotion of the king towards the god. Skanda-Kumāra was portrayed on the Gupta coinage both anthropomorphically and theriomorphically. On the reverse of some coins, the queen is represented in the act of feeding grapes to the peacock, which is the mount of Skanda-Kārttikeya. The depiction of the queen offering grapes to the peacock may indicate that the cult of Kārttikeya enjoyed state patronage during the period under study. The iconography of Skanda-Kārttikeya did not undergo noteworthy change except the fact that he is scattering something by right hand over an indistinct object. The peacock is perched upon a kind of platform.[19] The king is depicted here as offering grapes from a twig to the peacock on the obverse.[20] The symbols also have to be explained in the same way. The numismatic sources thus present to us a comprehensive account of the development of iconography in India; hence, the tremendous significance.

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Conclusion

The early Indian coins are of tremendous importance for the study of the origin and development of iconography in India inasmuch as they serve as the corroborative evidence to the description of the deities laid down in the early texts on iconography. For example, when we find Lord Śiva being described as Girīśa and Śaśāṅkaśekhara, it gets incidentally confirmed when the early indigenous coins depict on their both sides a symbol consisting of three or six arches topped by a crescent. Śiva has crescent on his forehead and the mountain represented by three-arches, six-arches, etc., is regarded as the permanent abode of Lord Śiva. Hence, the numismatic representation of the three and six arched crescented hill serves to corroborate the literary evidence, where Śaśāṅka is described as an attribute of Śiva and the mountain is described as the permanent abode of the god. The coins not only serve the purpose of corroborating the literary data on iconography but they also fortunately indicate the current method of representing any deity iconographically. It may be substantiated by the coins hailing from Ujjayini (discussed earlier), which depict Śiva in the anthropomorphic form. Ujjain was the sacred place of Śiva, where was the temple of Śiva-Mahākāla. Śiva depicted on the coins hailing from Ujjain, supposed to be the first anthropomorphic representation of the god, presents the current method of depicting the god. It was a surest measure to popularise coins with the people. Not even an image of the deity can be as up-to-date in matters of attributes and postures as the coins are.

The coins, in association with the seals of the early period, throw welcome light as to how the different objects and animals came to be associated with the deities as their attributes and vehicles. The trident may be cited as an example to substantiate the theory. The trident in the pre-historic period of Harappā and the bull were regarded as the aniconic and the theriomorphic representations of the god Śiva. The trident and the bull became associated with Śiva as his attribute and the bull as his *vāhana*. That the trident became his inalienable insignia is amply clear from the study of the Kuṣāṇa coins where we find Śiva with a trident in one of his hands on the coins of Wema-Kadphises. In the coins of the early period, the bull Nandī is represented as

looking at Śiva, who is enshrined in the temple. The bull became so closely associated with Śiva that on the coins of Skandagupta (Lakṣmī and bull type) he alone is depicted to represent the god.

The coins further serve to indicate various stages in the development of iconography. The coins seem to indicate three stages in the development of iconography: (i) the symbolic or aniconic, (ii) the theriomorphic and (iii) the anthropomorphic. The figures on the punch-marked and the cast coins are such, which may be described as the aniconic stage in the iconographic development. That the human figure, bearing something, which resembles a pot (*Kamaṇḍalu*), represents Śiva may not be beyond doubt. The early indigenous coinage seems, therefore, to be the representative of the symbolic or aniconic stage in the development of iconography. Likewise, other deities of the Brāhmaṇical pantheon, all of whom do not appear to have their separate identity, are represented symbolically on the early Indian coins. The sun-god was represented variously by the rayed disc, the wheel radiating with rays, the lotus, etc., on the early Indian coins. Besides, the Svastika and the cross may also be considered as symbolically indicating the four directions, in which the sun moves. In the iconographic representations of Sūrya in the later period, the cross and the Svastika did not find place. But the practice of placing rayed disc in front of the sun can be noticed on coins and seals. The wheel radiating with rays became associated with the sun-god in the form of a halo round his head. The lotus had become an attribute to be placed in the hands of Sūrya in the north Indian variety of the sun-god belonging to the Gupta and the mediaeval periods.

It is noticed that the wheel with rays or the rayed dic, which served as the symbol of Sūrya, was later on transferred to Sūrya as his attribute. The lotus was placed in one of his hands as his emblem. Likewise, the numerous symbols appearing on the early Indian coins became the emblem of deities in the later period, which can be noticed on the coins of the subsequent period discussed in the preceding chapters. 'The symbols and the devices, which figure on the punch-marked and other early Indian coins, amount to explicit iconography', asserts A.K. Coomaraswamy[1] and it is these symbols, which further lead to thelr association with the deities as their emblems. The coins therefore, are like a running commentary on the development of iconogrgahy.

Sometimes, the coins are of tremendous significance inasmuch as they depict the anthropomorphic figure of Lord Buddha for the first time side by side with the Mathurā and the Gāndhāra schools of art, where also the Buddha was represented in the anthropomorphic form. Incidentally the figure of the Buddha with begging bowl in one of his hands is depicted with his right hand raised up to the chest in the act of blessing or preaching. This portrayal of the Buddha on the coins gets confirmed after close scrutiny of the Mathurā images. The thirtytwo marks of the great men of course could not

be accommodated on the coins due to the smallness of the space. But the Buddha, the preacher, as we find his description in literature, finds the most befitting anthropomorphic representation on the coins issued by Kaniṣka, the Kuṣāṇa king. The coins are such a durable record to trace the development of iconography which could be preserved for a long period and which can withstand the onslaught of nature, wear and tear.

It is not only the group of the Indian deities that makes appearance on the coins. The deities of the Greek and the Zorastrian pantheons are also represented on the coins issued by the Indo-Greeks, the Śakas and the Kuṣāṇas. These Greek and Persian deiteis could not have been known to India, had they not been depicted on the coins meant for circulation ? It is only through these coins that we could know something about the iconographic traits of the deities of the Greeks and the Persians. It is on the basis of the study of the Greek and the Persian gods and goddesses that we seek to compare them with their Indian counterparts. In respect of depicting the Greek and the Persian deities, the Indian coins are undoubtedly important evidences for the iconographic study and thus we can lay emphasis on the development of different traits of the gods.

The coins issued during the Gupta period are virtually the culminating point for the study of the iconographic development. The study of the Indian coinages right from the period of the punch-marked coins to the Gupta coinage helps us in tracing and identifying the three stages namely the aniconic the theriomorphic and the anthropomorphic, and herein lies the significance of the coins as the most preservable record for the study of iconography.

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32	38	acquatic	aquactic
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47	27	away	sway
42	6	form of	Deleted
42	23	no	not
45	7	Into-Parthian	Indo-Parthian
	21	hesads	heads
46	15	Sun-rise	Sun-rise
47	18	in	is
	37	the another	he
49	11	or	of
50	41	bull	bull in
53	37	bettle-axe	battle-axe
57	3	de	be
	7	Śrīvatasa	Śrīvatsa
	10	tehriomorphic	theriomorphic
	16	Ārjuneyanas	Ārjunāyanas
	16	dotable	datable

Page	*Line*	*Incorrect*	*Correct*
59	8	conveived	conceived
61	25	lad	led
63	36	Sount	Sound
65	1	compoaed	composed
72	84	Shastri, A.N.,	Shastri, A.M.,
73	117	U.K.,	A.K.,
	132	Abhitāsit	Abhilāsit
74	179	op. cit.,	Deleted
81	30	Bus-king	bus-kins
82	31	status	statue
83	25	Helios on	Helios or
84	20	Antimacheus	Antimachus
	34	so	to
	35	his	her
84	4	in	on
85	36	keep	deep
86	6	Eucutides	Eucratides
	25	He	Deleted
87	7	inagined	imagined
	35	clan	clad
88	30	coins	coins at
92	14	scrupulously	scruplously
	31	in	is
93	7	Teophilus	Theophilus
	13	Herakls	Herakles
94	31	not	Deleted
	35	phydias	Phydias
76	16	Nṛṣṇī	Vṛṣṇī
98	116	Tara	Tarn
99	45	JASE	JASB
100	187	op. cit.,	Deleted
101	27	froeign	foreign
104	36	and	Deleted
108	9	little	title
	22	in form	in benign form
	35	chain	chin
109	30	numismatists	mintmasters
110	14	cantentions	contentions
	32	marge	merge
113	37	Eanna	Enanna
114	25	created	treated
	31	of	i,e,

Page	*Line*	*Incorrect*	*Correct*
117	17	Rohitaka	Rohataka
	20	Guṇas	Gaṇas
119	32	in	is
123	22	the Hindu	Deleted
126	27	or	of
127	24	enthronded	enthroned
	43	haed	head
128	3	figure	Figure
130	34	exstasy	ecstasy
133	37	extent	extant
136	15	depscted	depicted
	38	Mihtra	Mithra
137	1	or	bull
	34	frequent	frequently
142	32	and	Deleted
143	3	Starbo	Strabo
143	33	eaple	(eagle) known to
144	38	culture	cutter
157	10	figuriness	figurines
159	34	undersandable	understandable
166	37	reprensented	represented
168	28	bad	bead
169	21	secrifice	sacrifice
171	10	si	is
	40	present	Deleted
175	5	ad	an
176	40	he	the
185	6	stage	stages
188	3	symbolis	symbols
189	22	fore head	forehead of
191	30	tho	the
	39	their	three
194	13	or	of
197	33	theri	their
	34	iconogrgahy	iconography
198	10	deiteis	deities

NO 97

VOL II

(VOL I Pl XII Fig.17)

502

512

Pl CXIV

513

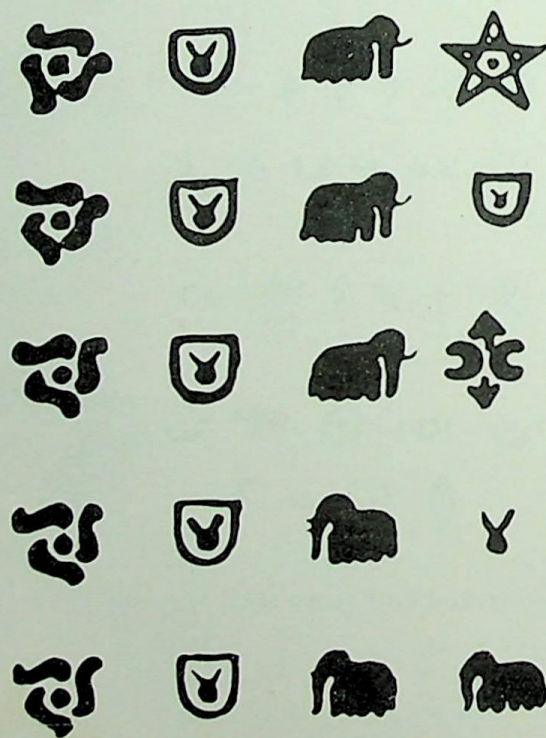
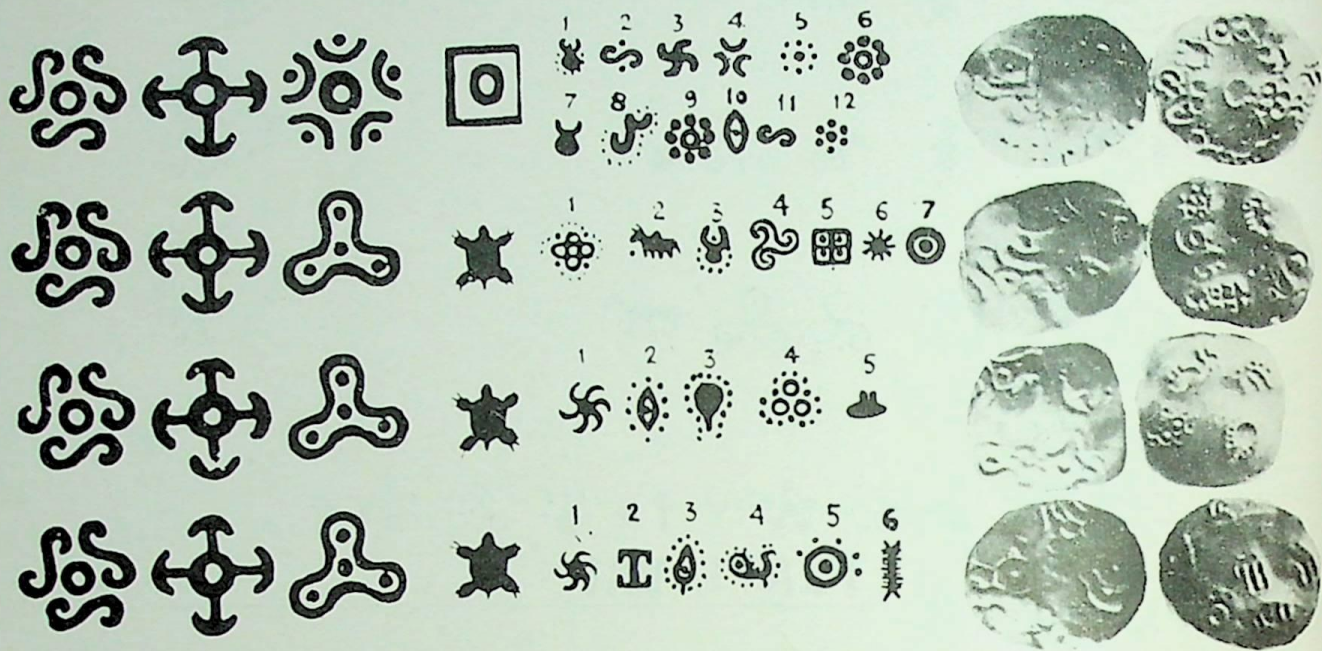
528 b

1. Indus Valley seals.

Seal reference	No.	Figure reference
CCXCVI SEAL 424	1	XXII Fig 51, Fig 52
CCCI SEAL 444	2	XXII FIG 70, XXV Fig 21
CCXCVII SEAL 552	3	XXV FIG 96
CCLVI SEAL 469	4	XXIII FIG 108
CCLXI SEAL 374	5	XXVII Fig 97a
CCCXXXI SEAL 540	6	XXIV FIG 196
CCCL SEAL 395	7	XXIII FIG 137, XXVI FIG 55
XLVIII SEAL 188	8	XXV FIG 87
XLIX SEAL 343	9	XXIII FIG 112, XXIII FIG 113
L SEAL 236	10	XXIII FIG 110, XXV FIG 87a
LXIII SEAL 235	11	XXIII FIG 114
LXXXVII SEAL 253	12	XXIII FIG 117
LXXXII SEAL 58	13	XXIII FIG 118
CXX SEAL 152	14	XXII FIG 53
CXLVII SEAL 341	15	XXIII FIG 88
CXLVIII SEAL 341, 337	16	XXV FIG 37
LXXVII SEAL 307	17	XXIII FIG 93 & XXV FIG 3[illegible]
XV SEAL 211	18	XXIV FIG 173
VIII SEAL 300	19	
CXXXIX SEAL 4[illegible]2	20	XXV FIG 88
CXXXVI SEAL 130	21	XXV FIG 118
CXCII SEAL 25[illegible]	22	XXVI FIG. 52
CXCIII SEAL 102	23	XXVII FIG 124
CLXXXII SEAL 252	24	XXVII FIG 111a
CCXIII SEAL 548	25	XXV FIG. 101
CCXVII SEAL 253	26	XXII FIG. 1
CCLXXXIII SEAL 101	27	XXII FIG. 30
CCCXXIV SEAL 54[illegible]	28	XXII FIG 106
CCCXXIX SEAL 340	29	XXVII FIG. 122
CLIX SEAL 225	30	XXIII FIG. 107

SEE SIR J MARSHALL'S MOHENJO-DARO AND THE INDUS CIVILIZATION VOL. III.

II. Symbols on Indus Valley seals.

III a-b. Punch-marked coins and their symbols.

IV a-b. Punch-marked coins and their symbols.

V. Punch-marked coins and their symbols.

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VI. Punch-marked coins and their symbols.

VII. Punch-marked coins and their symbols.

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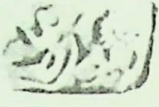
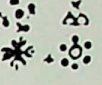
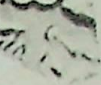
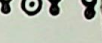
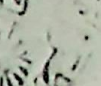
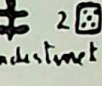
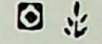
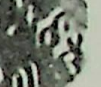
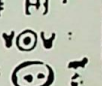
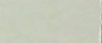
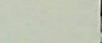
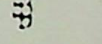
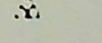
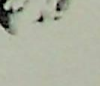

VIII. Punch-marked coins and their symbols.

IX. Punch-marked coins and their symbols.

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
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X. Punch-marked coins and their symbols.

d their symbols.

144 5A	3A2	Lucknow
145	19A1	? Lucknow
146	20A1	Lucknow
147	11A1	Lucknow
148	38A.	? Lucknow
149 103A	41A12	Ahraura
150 132A	42B1	? Ahraura
151 41A	24A	0 see Teregna
152 17A	8B2	see Teregna

Durga Prasad.

VARIETIES OF SYMBOLS FOUND ON LATER SILVER PUNCH MARKED COINS IN THE AUTHOR'S CABINET.

Objects Symbols Supplement.

XII. Punch-marked coins and their symbols.

XIII. Symbols on the Punch-marked coins.

XIV. Symbols on the Punch-marked coins.

161 162 163 164 165 166 167 168

169 170 171 172 173 174 175 176

177 178 179 180 181 182 183 184

185 186 187 188 189 190 191 192

193 194 195 196 197 198 199 200

201 202 203 204 205 206 207 208 209 210

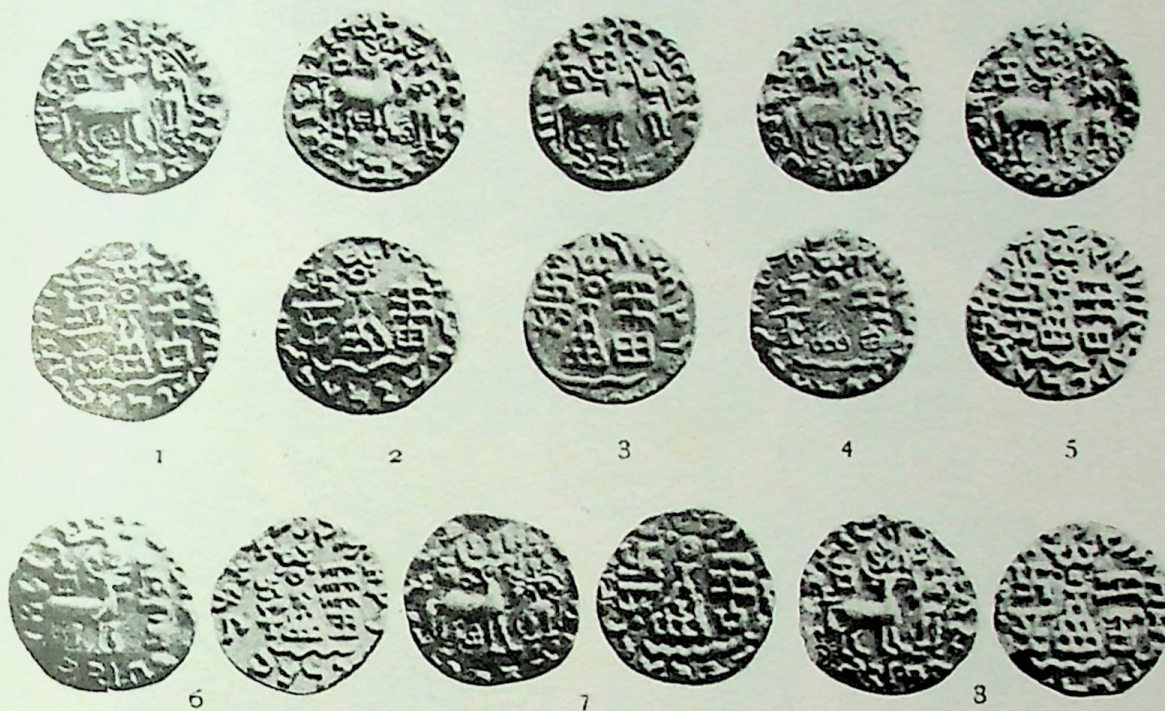
211 212 213 214 215 216 217 218 219

220 221 222 223 224 225 226 227

228 229 230 231 232 233 234 235

236 237 238 239 240 241 242 243 244

XV. Symbols on the Punch-marked coins.

XVI. a-b. Coins of the Audumbaras.

XVII. Coins of the Kunindas.

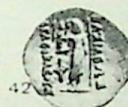
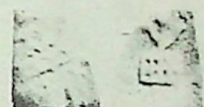
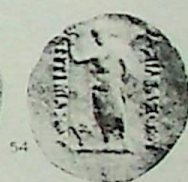
XVIII. Coins of the Kunindas.

XIX. Coins of the Pañca las.

XX. Coins of the Pāñcālas.

XXI. Coins of Ujjayini.

XXII. Coins of the Yaudheyas.

XXIII a. Coins of the Yaudheyas.

XXIII b. Coins of the Indo-Bactrian Rulers (Pantaleon, Antimachus Theos, and Eucratides)

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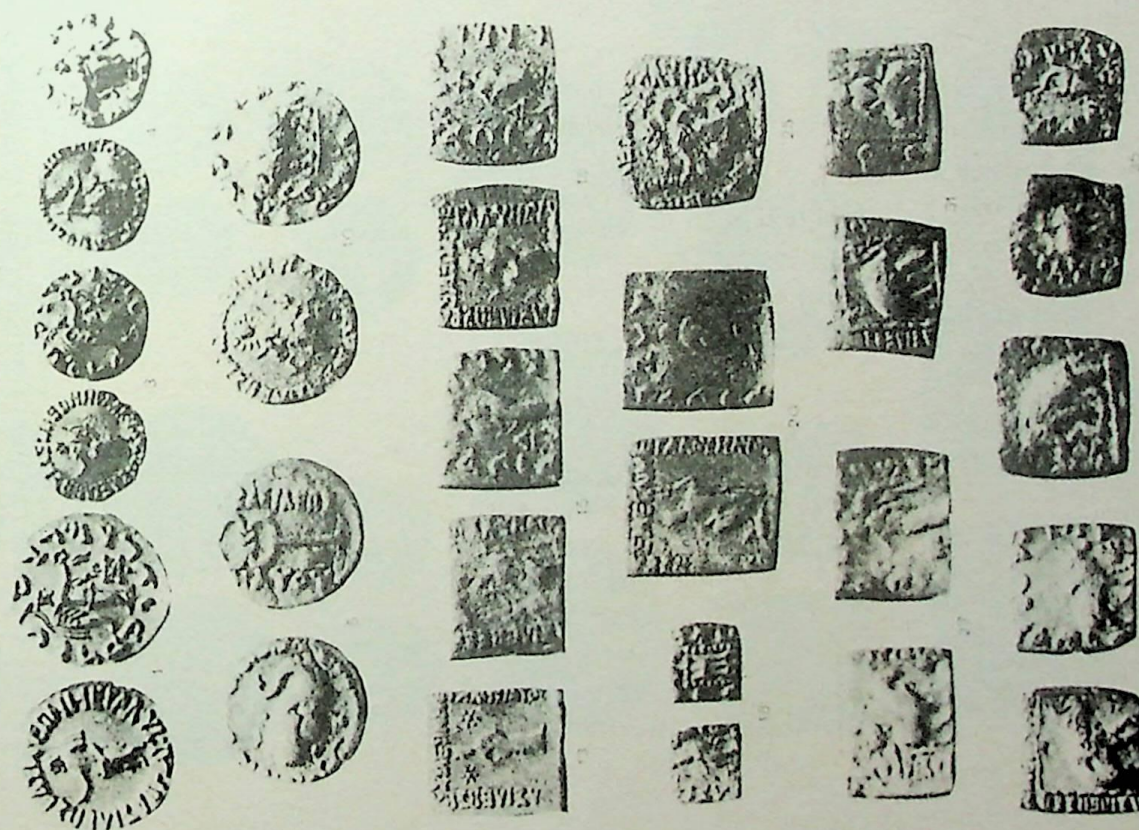
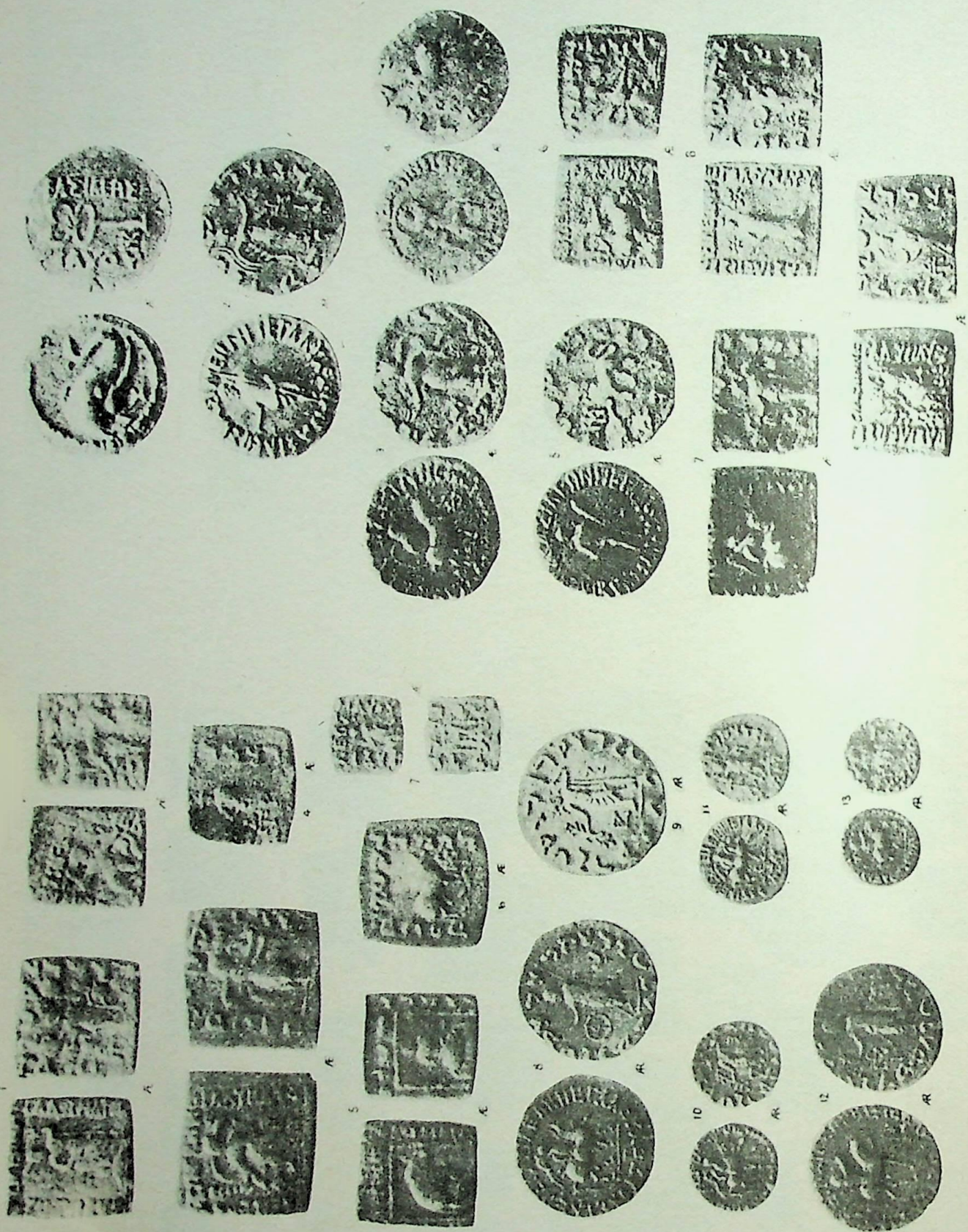
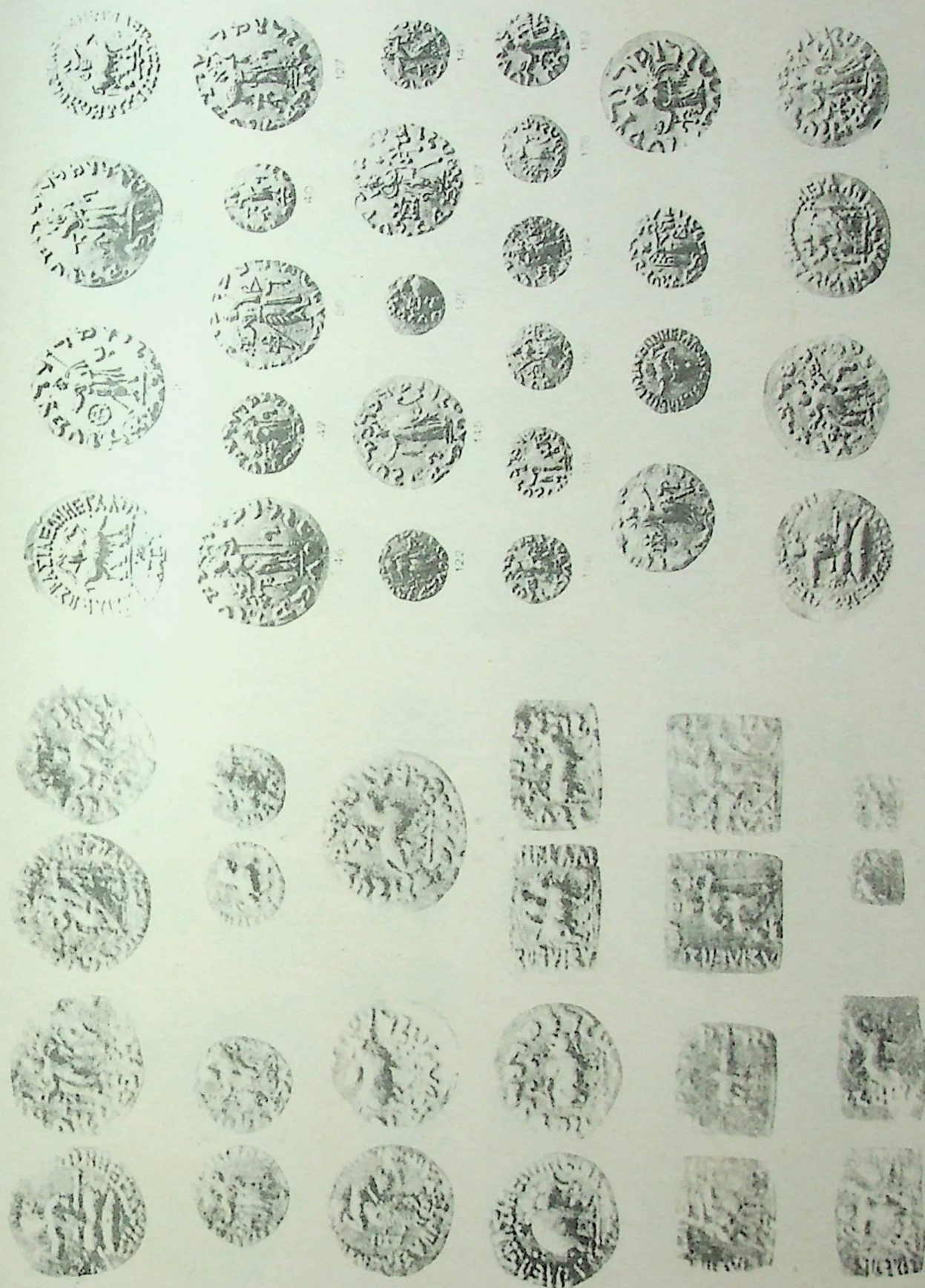
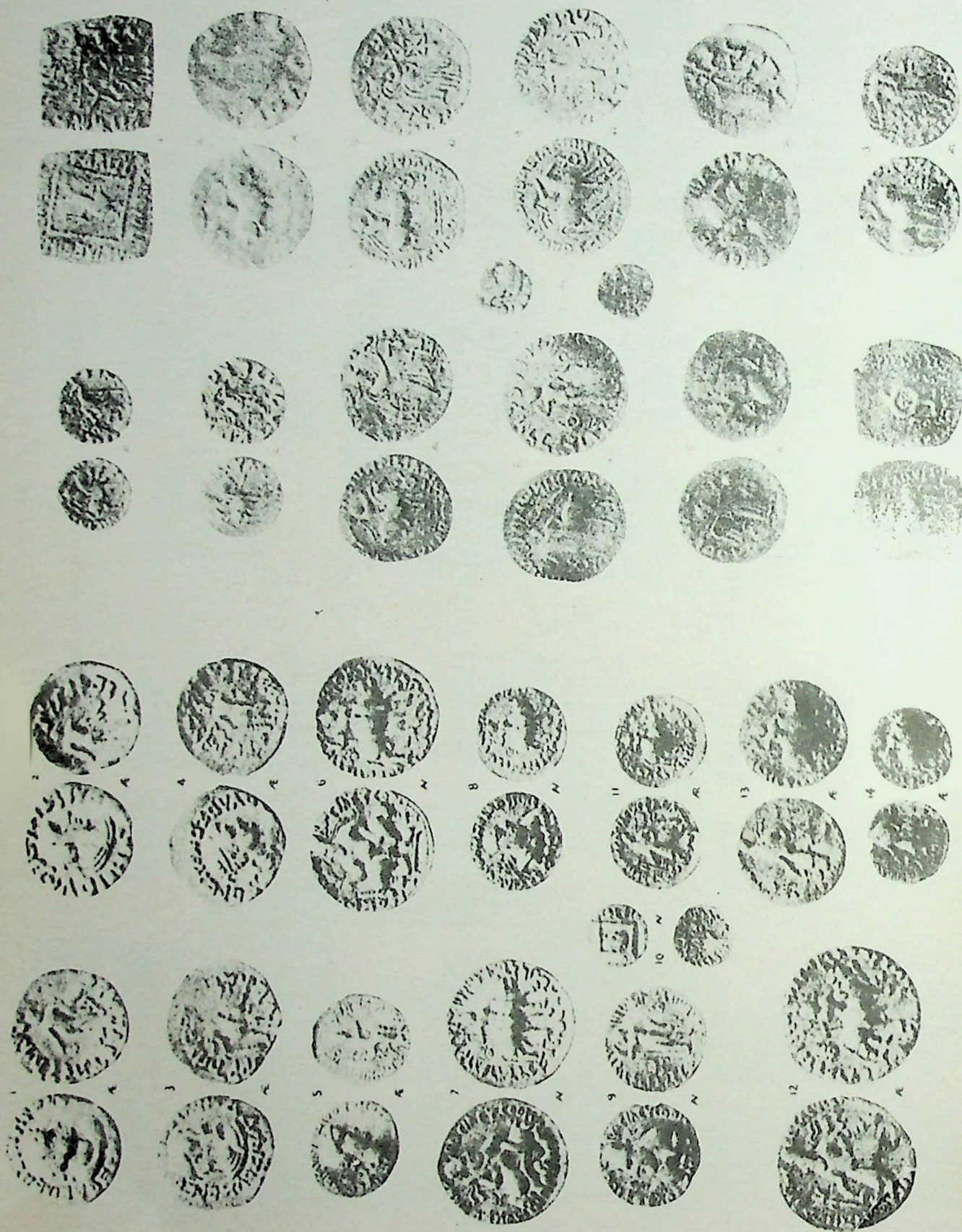
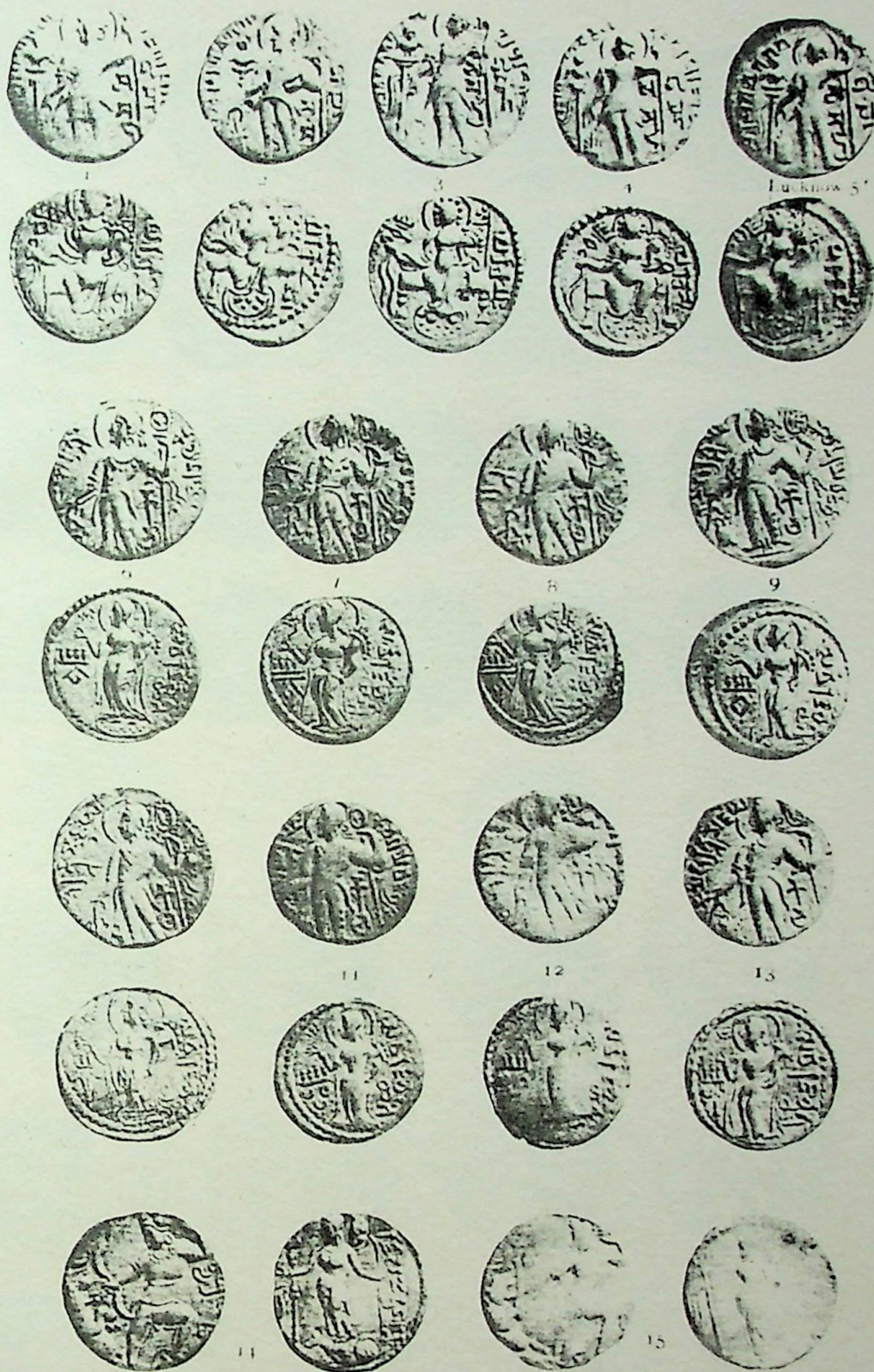
XXIV b. Coins of the Indo-Bactrian rulers (Menander and Epander).

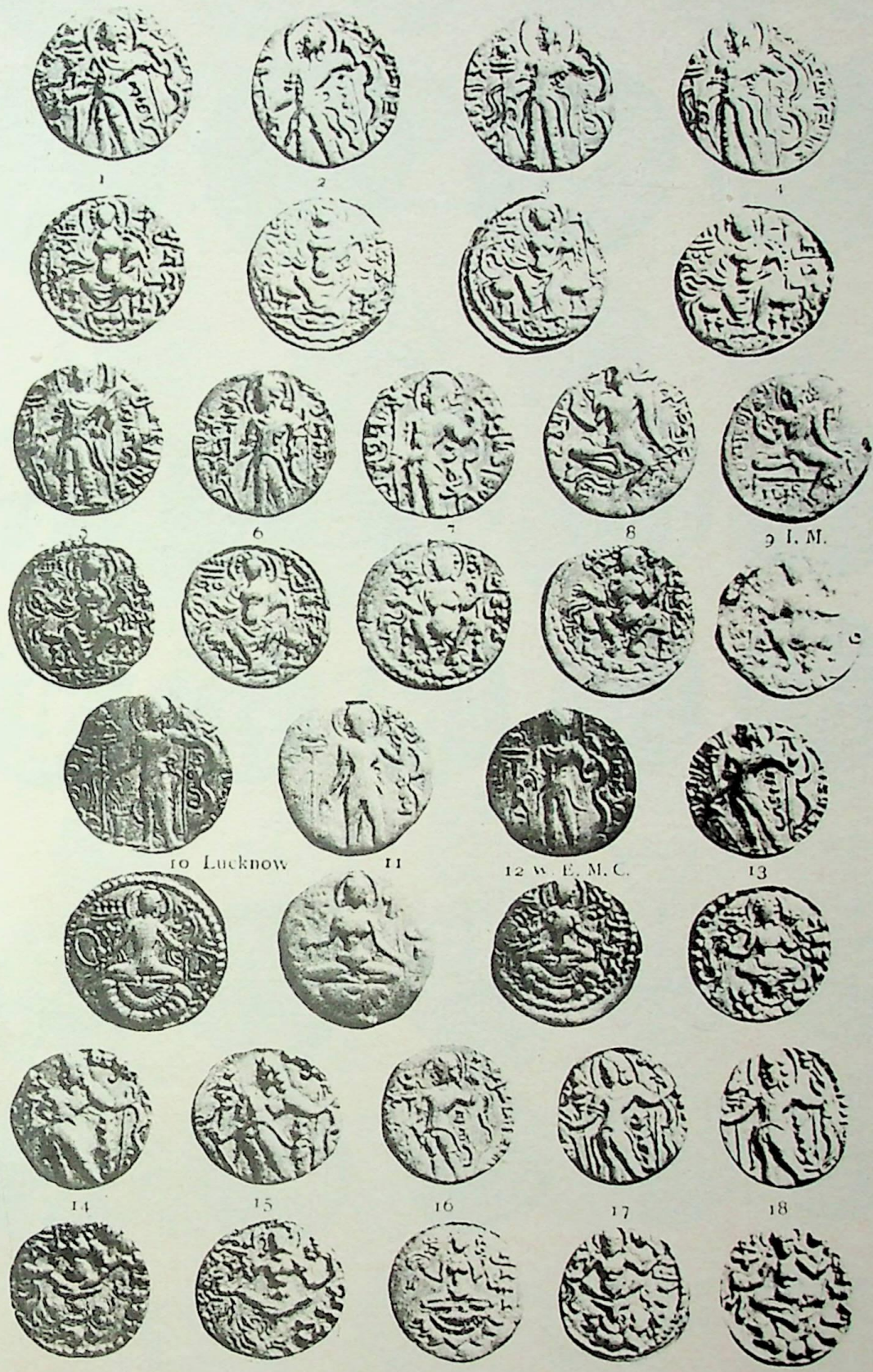
XXIV a. Coins of the Indo-Bactrian rulers (Eucratides, Heliocles, Lycias and Antialkidas).

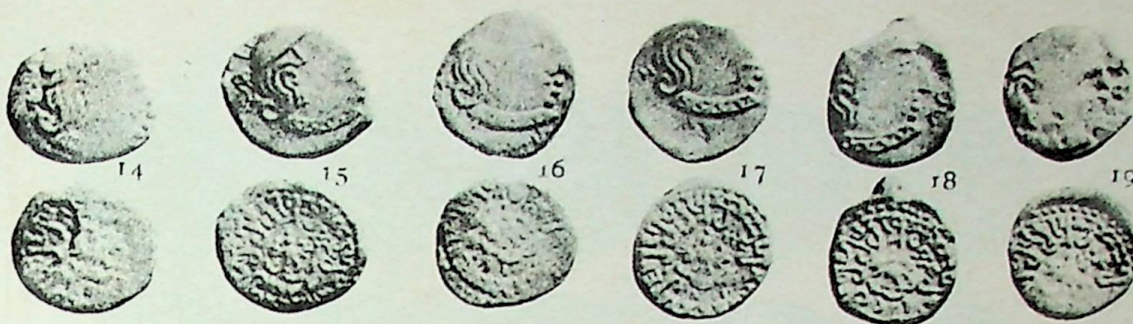
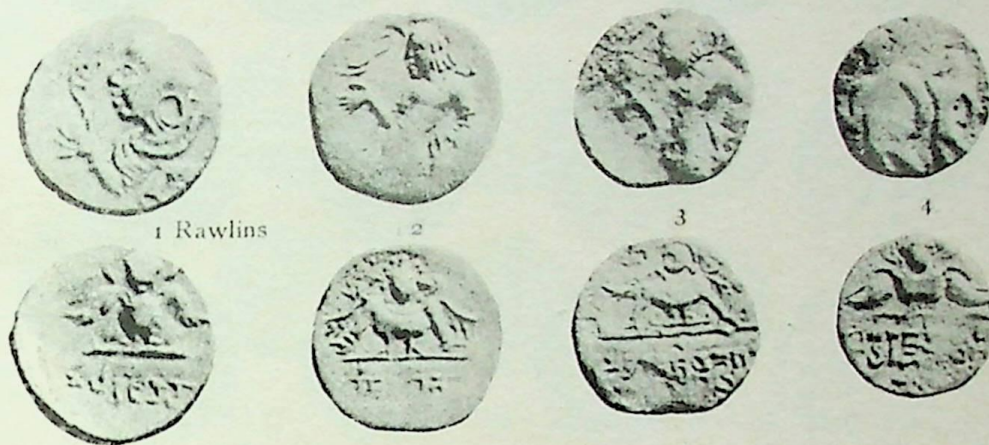
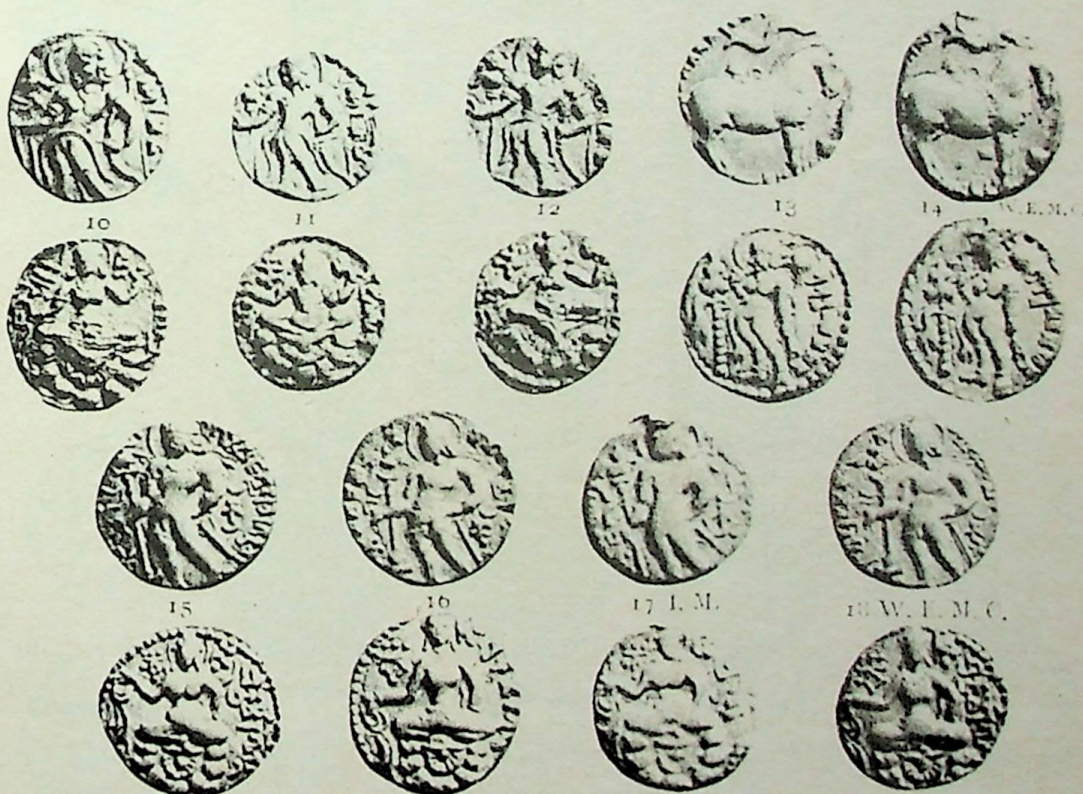
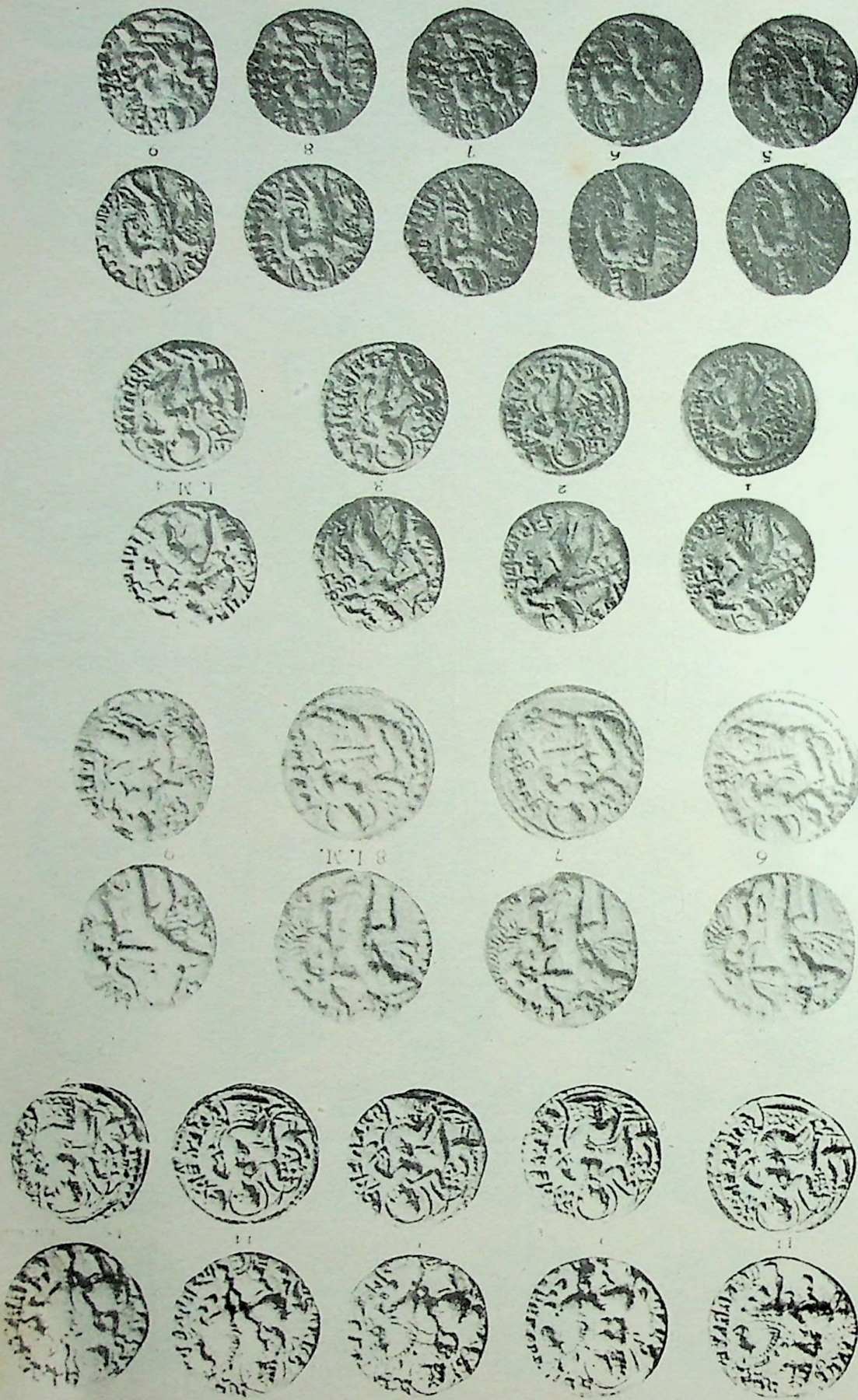
XXV b. Coins of the Indo-Scythian ruler (Maues). XXV a. Coins of the Indo-Bactrian and the Scythian rulers) (Hermaeus, Calliope, Rajuvula).

XXVI b. Coins of the Indo-Scythian rulers (Maues & Azes).

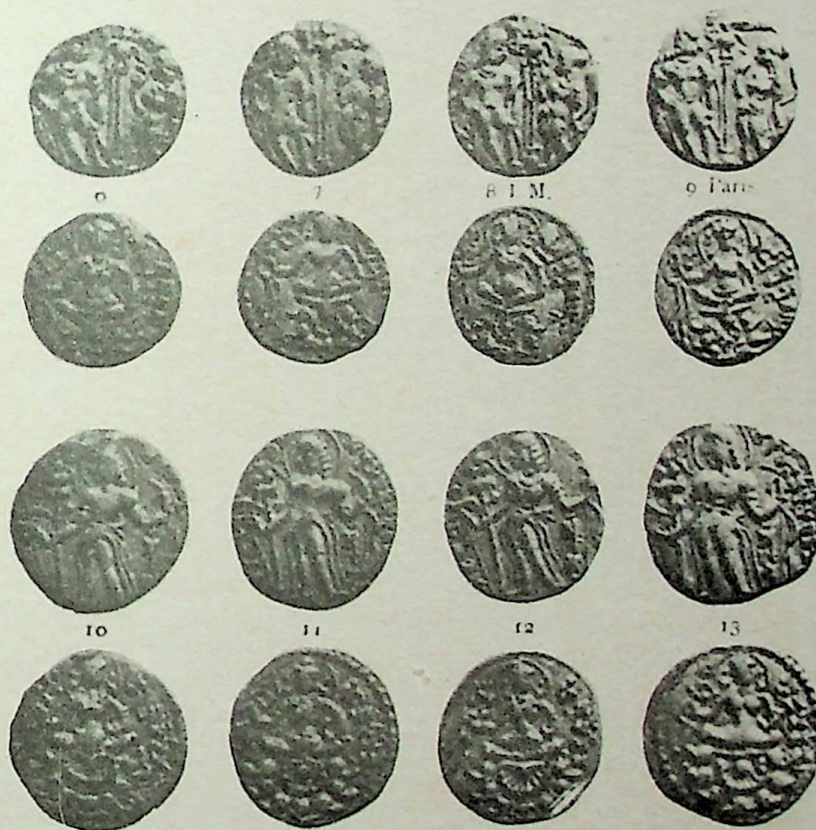
XXVI a. Coins of the Indo-Scythian ruler (Maues).

XXVII a-b. Coins of the Indo-Scythian ruler (Azes).

XXVIII b. Coins of the Kuṣāṇas (Kadphises I and Wima-Kadphises).

XXVIII a. Coins of the Indo-Parthian rulers (Spalirises and Gondophares).

XXX. Coins of the Imperial Guptas (Chandragupta I—Gold).

XXXI. Coins of the Imperial Guptas (Samudragupta and Kāca—Gold).

XXXII a-b. Coins of the Imperial Guptas (Samudragupta—Gold).

XXXIII. Coins of the Imperial Guptas (Candragupta II Vikramāditya—Gold).

XXXIV a-c. Coins of the Imperial Guptas (Chandragupta II **Vikramā-** ditya).

XXXV a. Coins of the Imperial Guptas (Chandragupta II Vikramāditya – Silver)

XXXV b. Coins of the Imperial Guptas (Chandragupta II Vikramāditya—Copper).

XXXV c. Coins of the Imperial Guptas (Kumārgupta I – Gold).

XXXVI-a-c. Coins of the Imperial Guptas (Kumāragupta I—Gold).

XXXVII a. Coins of the Imperial Guptas (Kumārgupta I – Silver).

XXXVII b. Coins of the Imperial Guptas (Skandagupta – Gold).

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